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THE WORLD'S BEST NEWS & FACTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

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Remembering the legendary Jane Goodall
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Making sense of the world

THE WEEK Junior

THE BEST MAGAZINE FOR CURIOUS KIDS

SHOULD U.S. MONEY GET NEW FACES?

Is it time to update our cash? Say what you think in our big debate! p8

FAVORITE FRIEND
For more than 30 years, Jane Goodall carried a stuffed monkey named Mr. H with her wherever she traveled.

Jane Goodall in 2003

An animal lover

Jane Goodall loved all animals, including dogs, and spent her 90th birthday with 90 dogs on a California beach. She threw sticks into the water for the pups, who played and posed for a photo (shown above) with her and their owners. "It was as good as I could have imagined," Goodall said.

Jane Goodall is remembered

World-renowned animal behavior scientist, environmental activist, and humanitarian Jane Goodall died on October 1 at age 91. Known for studying chimpanzees in the wild for 65 years, Goodall also worked tirelessly to inspire young people to be involved in animal conservation and fought for human rights around the world.

What was her early life like?

Goodall was born Valerie Jane Morris-Goodall in 1934 in London, England. As a child she dreamed of living among animals, brought earthworms into her bedroom, and spent hours in her family's henhouse. Her mother encouraged her curiosity about the natural world. Goodall later worked as a restaurant server to earn money so she could achieve her dream of traveling to Africa and learning more about animals.

How did her work begin?

Goodall first visited Africa at age 23. While there, she contacted Louis Leakey, a famous paleontologist (scientist who studies the past through fossils), who hired her and became her mentor. Leakey asked Goodall to study families of chimpanzees in the wild in Tanzania, and in 1960, she arrived at what is now Gombe National Park with a notebook and binoculars. Goodall spent days alone in the jungle studying the chimpanzees, earning their trust and giving them names like David Greybeard, William, and Flo. She chronicled their social lives, parenting habits, and what she called their "rich emotional life." Goodall was also the first to observe that chimps made and used tools. This discovery, considered one of the most important ever made about animal behavior, led scientists to reconsider human history and our relationship to animals.

With a chimpanzee named Nana

What was her influence on the world?

In Africa in 1965

Goodall gained global fame through documentaries, books, and articles about her work. She established the Gombe Stream Research Center in 1965 and earned a PhD (advanced degree) in animal behavior in 1966. Her focus later expanded to protecting chimpanzees, their habitat, and the planet. In 1977, she founded the Jane Goodall Institute, now one of the world's largest nonprofit conservation organizations. Its Roots & Shoots program, established in 1991, teaches children in 75 nations about conservation. Goodall wrote 32 books, including 15 for children. Into her 90s, she continued traveling about 300 days a year. She was named a United Nations Messenger of Peace in 2002 and received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the US, from Joe Biden in 2025.

How did people react to her death?

Tributes for Goodall poured in from around the world. "She worked absolutely tirelessly to make the world better for everyone, whether you were young or old, rich or poor, human or any other animal," said Ben Garrod, a biologist who worked with Goodall. "Her vision of a just and thriving world for people and nature endures," said Kaddu Sebunya, head of the African Wildlife Foundation. Many women said Goodall inspired them to be scientists. "It was after reading her books that I put on my boots and binoculars and went out in the jungle," said Catherine Crockford, a chimpanzee expert.

Before her death, Goodall recorded an interview that she knew would air only after she died. In it, she shared a message for others. "We have to do everything in our power to make the world a better place," Goodall said. "You have it in your power to make a difference. Don't give up."

UNESCO names protected areas

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) named 26 new biosphere reserves in 21 countries on September 21. These sites have some of the planet's richest biodiversity (variety of living things in an area) but are at risk due to climate change and human activity. There are 784 reserves in 142 countries.

Biosphere reserves have been classified in Angola, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Iceland, Oman, and Tajikistan for the first time. The Snæfellsnes Peninsula in Iceland features more than 70% of the country's plant life. Manatees, sea turtles, and more than 200 species of birds live in the Quiçama reserve in Angola.

Biosphere reserves have some designated areas that are strictly protected and some that are open only for research or educational purposes. Other areas are important for local communities that rely on them for food, work, or cultural traditions. In these sections, residents work closely with scientists and government officials to balance the needs of people and nature.

A biosphere reserve in Albania

Some of the books that are banned most often in the US

KEEPING COUNT

PEN America has documented nearly 23,000 cases of book bans in 45 US states since 2021.

Banned Books Week held in US

From October 5 to 11, Banned Books Week drew attention to book bans and promoted people's right to choose what they read and share ideas. The week came amid an increase in efforts to remove books from schools and libraries.

Books are banned when they are removed from shelves because people oppose their subject matter. These books are often about race or LGBTQ+ topics. During the 2024–2025 school year, 6,870 books were removed at schools in 23 states. Florida, Texas, and Tennessee had the most bans.

This year's Banned Books Week theme was "Censorship Is So 1984—Read for Your Rights." Actor and author George Takei, who has written about his experiences in a World War II prison camp for Japanese Americans and as an LGBTQ+ person, was the honorary chairperson. "I felt confused and hungry for understanding about myself and the world around me," Takei said about the lack of access to a broad range of books during his childhood. Iris Mogul, founder of a banned books club in Florida, was the youth honorary chair.

To mark the week, PEN America, a nonprofit, encouraged people to read banned books. The American Library Association set October 11 as Let Freedom Read Day. Libraries in Wichita, Kansas, screened a documentary about book bans, while New York City libraries hosted a panel of teens talking about the importance of being able to read freely. "Books can open people's minds and help them interpret their own experiences in new ways that allow them to empathize with the experiences of others," said Kasey Meehan, an official at PEN America. "The right to read must be protected."

IT'S AN AMAZING WEEK FOR...

A CHEESE CHAMPION

For the first time, an American was named best cheesemonger at one of the world's top cheese competitions. Emilia D'Albero of Pennsylvania said winning the gold medal in cheese expertise was "an immense honor."

Emilia D'Albero

A foster kitten

CARING FOR KITTENS

Abdul Raheem has gone viral for posting videos of his work fostering kittens in his home in Washington, DC. Raheem has bathed, bottle-fed, and snuggled more than 200 of the tiny creatures and helped them get adopted. "Cats just bring everyone peace," he said.

SPECIAL SOCKS

Socktober is underway! Since 2011, the annual campaign has collected and distributed millions of pairs of socks for people who are unhoused. The program, which began in Tennessee, encourages sock drives in local communities and has expanded across the US and beyond. Find out more at happysocktober.com.

ON THE COVER: GETTY IMAGES (4); SEGA; ON THIS PAGE: COURTESY THE PUBLISHERS; UNESCO; ALEXANDRE ALLOUL; GETTY IMAGES (2); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (3); FACEBOOK/@THE LEAKEY FOUNDATION

BUDGET CONTROL
The US Constitution grants Congress "the power of the purse," the ability to collect taxes and spend money to run the government.

The Capitol building, where Congress meets, in Washington, DC

The last shutdown

The last shutdown was the longest in US history at 35 days. It began on December 22, 2018, and ended on January 25, 2019, during President Donald Trump's first term. The funding dispute, which some people protested (above), was over construction of a wall along the border between the US and Mexico.

Federal government shuts down

On October 1, the US government shut down due to a disagreement among lawmakers over the annual budget. The government can't reopen until a new budget is agreed upon.

What happened?

Every year, the House of Representatives and the Senate (two parts of Congress) must pass a new budget that will allow the government to spend money. This year, lawmakers failed to agree on a budget before the current one expired on September 30. As a result, the government suspended the pay of about 2 million workers. Of those, about 750,000 were considered non-essential and put on unpaid leave. The rest were declared essential and are required to work without pay until a deal is reached. Essential workers include air traffic controllers, active-duty military members, and US Postal Service staff.

How will this be resolved?

The Senate must introduce budget plans until one gets the required 60 votes and is then approved by the House and the President. Republicans said they want to pass a temporary bill that would allow the government to reopen while they debate with Democrats on a longer-term budget. Democrats believe that agreeing to a temporary plan won't help them get health care funding, which Republicans oppose, into the budget.

What is the health care debate?

Republicans want to continue to fund the government at about the same level. But because of tax credits (discounts) that expire at the end of the year, the Republican plan could result in health insurance costs rising for more than 20 million people and about 4 million people losing their insurance altogether. Democrats want to prevent that and undo cuts to Medicare, which provides health care to older and disabled Americans, all of which would add $1 trillion to the budget.

What will happen next?

On October 6, Democrats and Republicans in the Senate introduced separate measures to fund the government, but neither one got enough votes to pass. When *The Week Junior* went to press the next day, lawmakers remained locked in their positions and federal workers continued to go without pay.

WORD OF THE WEEK

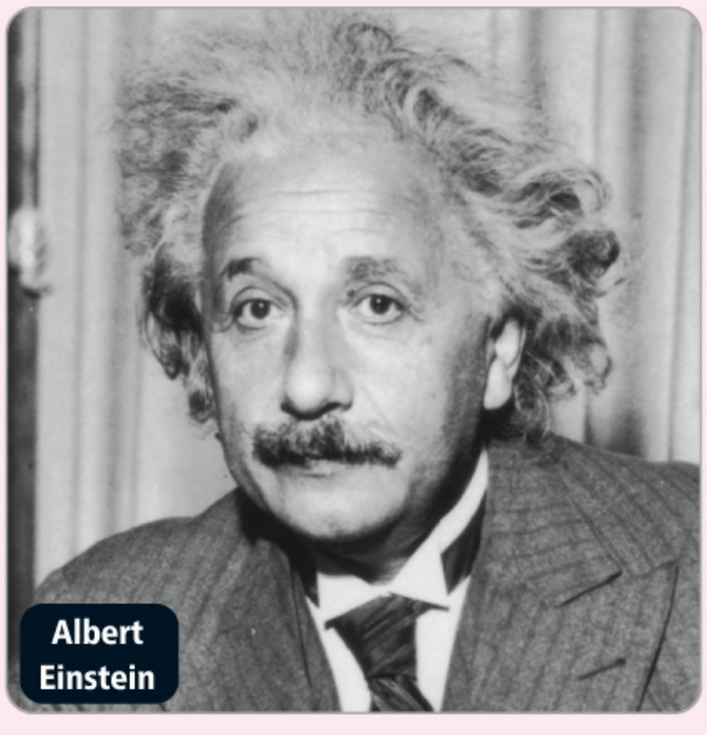
PIONEER

Jane Goodall, who died on October 1, was a pioneer in researching primates, including chimpanzees. The word "pioneer" originated from French, where a *pionnier* was a foot soldier who went ahead of an army to clear the path. In English, it came to describe an individual who makes significant advances in their field, opening up a path for others to follow.

THE WEEK IN HISTORY

October 17, 1933
Albert Einstein arrives in the US

On October 17, 1933, Albert Einstein, one of the greatest scientists in world history, came to the US at age 54. He was Jewish and fled Germany because the Nazis, the ruling party led by Adolf Hitler, threatened his safety. The Nazis ultimately killed more than 6 million Jewish people and millions of others. Einstein became a US citizen in 1940 and never returned to Germany.



Albert Einstein

"Chunk" the champ

Fat Bear Week winners chosen

A 20-year-old brown bear with a broken jaw, known as 32 "Chunk," was crowned the champion of Fat Bear Week, which is held in Katmai National Park in Alaska. More than 1.5 million votes were cast in the annual contest, which celebrates the park's bears as they gain weight before hibernation. This was Chunk's first win, after having previously been a runner-up. The champion of Fat Bear Junior, the contest for young cubs, was 128 Junior "Biggie."

Snowy winter predicted for US

The upcoming winter in parts of the US may be snowier than the past few have been, according to the media company AccuWeather. Higher snowfall is predicted in the Midwest, Great Lakes, Ohio Valley, and Northeast. Colder Arctic air may also strike the Midwest. Experts say that while some regions may have more snow than last year, the amount is still likely to be below previous averages.

A view of the balloons

Hot-air balloon festival lifts off

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, the world's largest hot-air balloon festival, began on October 4 in New Mexico. Pilots from around the world will launch more than 500 balloons into the air during the nine-day event, which is expected to attract hundreds of thousands of visitors. The festival began in 1972 with 13 balloons. Today, more than 3,000 volunteers produce the event.

Taylor Swift

WOW! Taylor Swift's Eras Tour consisted of 149 shows on five continents and was the most successful world tour in history, making more than $2 billion.

Taylor Swift's album sets records

Pop superstar Taylor Swift released her 12th studio album, *The Life of a Showgirl,* on October 3. It broke records within 24 hours, and she became the first and only female artist in the US to surpass 100 million certified album sales.

The Life of a Showgirl includes 12 songs and runs 41 minutes, making it one of Swift's shortest albums. It includes one collaboration, with pop singer Sabrina Carpenter on the title track. Swift—who said she recorded the album while finishing her 21-month global Eras Tour last year—worked with Swedish record producers and songwriters Max Martin and Shellback to create it. She described the music as coming from "the most infectiously joyful" place.

A fan with the vinyl album

Before its release, *The Life of a Showgirl* became the most pre-saved album in Spotify history. When it launched, it set records as the platform's most streamed album in 24 hours, and its lead single, "The Fate of Ophelia," became Spotify's most streamed song in a single day. The album broke first-day streaming records on Apple Music and Amazon Music and sold 2.7 million copies in the US—including 1.2 million vinyl records. Many fans who wanted to be among the first to buy the vinyl album in person lined up at stores that were open at midnight for the release.

Swift also worked with AMC Theatres to present a film called *The Official Release Party of a Showgirl*. The 89-minute movie, shown from October 3 to 5, featured behind-the-scenes footage and the music video for "The Fate of Ophelia." It was the highest-grossing movie in the US that weekend, earning $33 million, and made $46 million worldwide—a rare success for a film announced two weeks before its premiere.

With the album out, Swift said she plans to release more music videos and continue exploring her music style. "I love the theme of this album," she told a UK radio show. "It's fun to play with."

THE WEEK'S SILLIEST HEADLINE

"Herd of escaped yaks visit Ohio middle school" *UPI*

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Around the world

Sébastien Lecornu

Paris, France
Leader resigns after very short term

Prime minister Sébastien Lecornu resigned after 26 days in the role. After he selected his cabinet (top advisers), they were criticized by politicians in the National Assembly. Facing opposition, Lecornu said, "The conditions were not fulfilled for me to carry out my function." President Emmanuel Macron must now decide whether to appoint another prime minister—the country's sixth in less than two years—or call for an election.

Bridgetown, Barbados

Barbados
Deal for movement between countries

Barbados has made a pact with three other nations in the Caribbean region—Belize, Dominica, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines—to allow citizens to live and work freely across all four countries without needing special permits. Officials from an organization called Caribbean Community hope this arrangement will keep skilled workers from leaving the region to seek employment elsewhere.

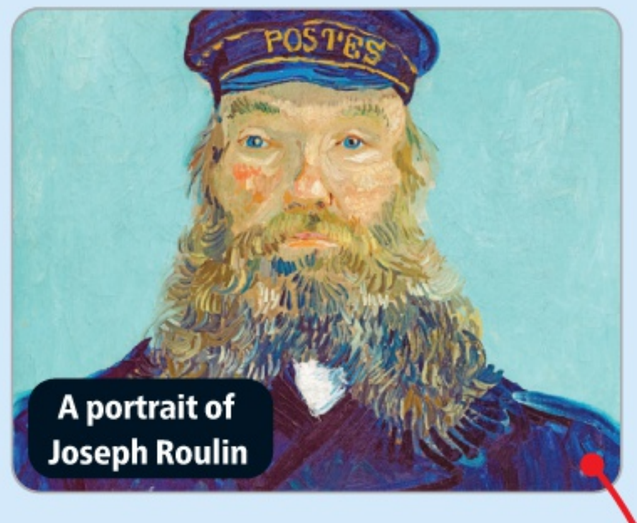
Young people lead the protests.

Morocco
Protests over government spending

Demonstrations against public spending have been taking place in cities across Morocco. As the country prepares to co-host the 2030 FIFA World Cup, it is paying billions of dollars for new soccer stadiums and infrastructure such as trains and roads. Protesters, led by a group called GenZ 212, think the government should improve services like health care and education instead.

Amsterdam, the Netherlands
Van Gogh exhibition opens

On October 3, the Van Gogh Museum opened an exhibition bringing together 26 portraits painted by Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890). The artworks feature postman Joseph Roulin and members of his family. An armchair shown in some of the portraits has been found and now appears in the exhibition for the first time.



A portrait of Joseph Roulin

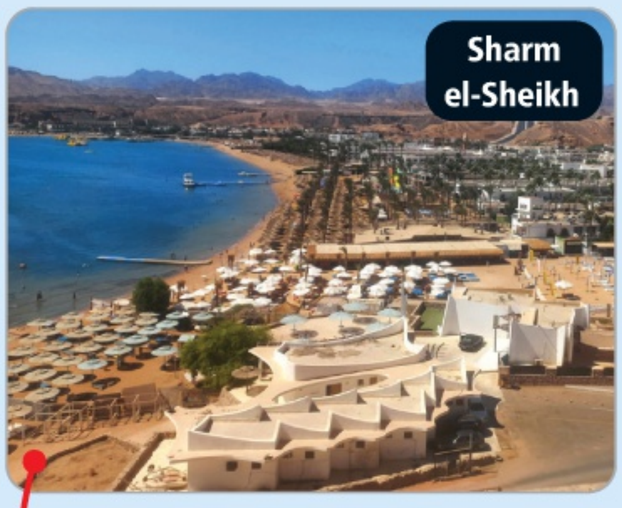
Lesotho
Water controversy

About 1,600 people have filed a complaint over a new multibillion-dollar project to transport water from Lesotho to South Africa. Locals complained to the African Development Bank, which funded the project, that the construction has damaged homes, blocked access to fields, and polluted water. The agency managing the work claims that any damage to houses will be fixed and the water quality is currently within acceptable limits.

The project site

AP; GETTY IMAGES (4); ALAMY (2); MARIA GUAGNIN/SAHOUT ROCK ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT; SHUTTERSTOCK (2)

Around the world



Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt
Peace talks begin

Two years after Hamas (a terrorist group based in Gaza) attacked Israel on October 7, 2023, leaders from both sides met in Egypt to discuss a plan to end the ongoing war between them. Key points included ending the fighting, allowing aid, and releasing hostages and prisoners. Representatives from the US, Egypt, and Qatar also attended.

Afghanistan
Two-day internet blackout ends

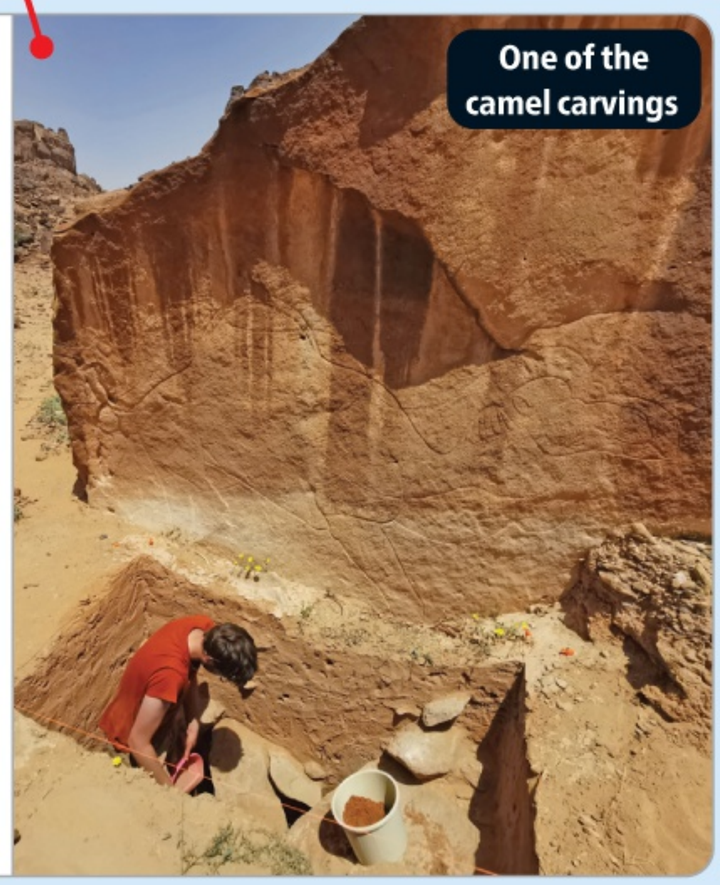
Internet access has been restored in many parts of Afghanistan after a two-day outage. On September 29, the Taliban, an extremist group that controls Afghanistan, shut down internet and mobile phone networks throughout the country. No official reason was given for the sudden blackout in communications, which lasted 48 hours. The outage disrupted flights and businesses and limited people's access to emergency services.

Guizhou, China
World's highest bridge opens

The highest bridge in the world officially opened on September 29. The Huajiang Grand Canyon Bridge stands 2,051 feet above the Beipan River and the canyon below. Less than a mile long, the bridge will allow drivers to travel across the canyon in two minutes instead of two hours. It also offers tourist attractions, including a bungee jumping station and a glass elevator that connects to a coffee shop 2,600 feet in the sky.

Saudi Arabia
Rock art found

In the Saudi Arabian desert, scientists have discovered animal-themed rock carvings dating back about 12,000 years. Experts believe the 6-foot-tall works of art were carved using a wedge-shaped rock. They depict 19 life-size camels and other animals such as gazelles, ibexes (wild goats), and an ancestor of modern cattle called the aurochs. The discovery shows that people were living in the area about 2,000 years earlier than scientists had previously thought.



Cebu, Phillipines
Recovering after earthquake

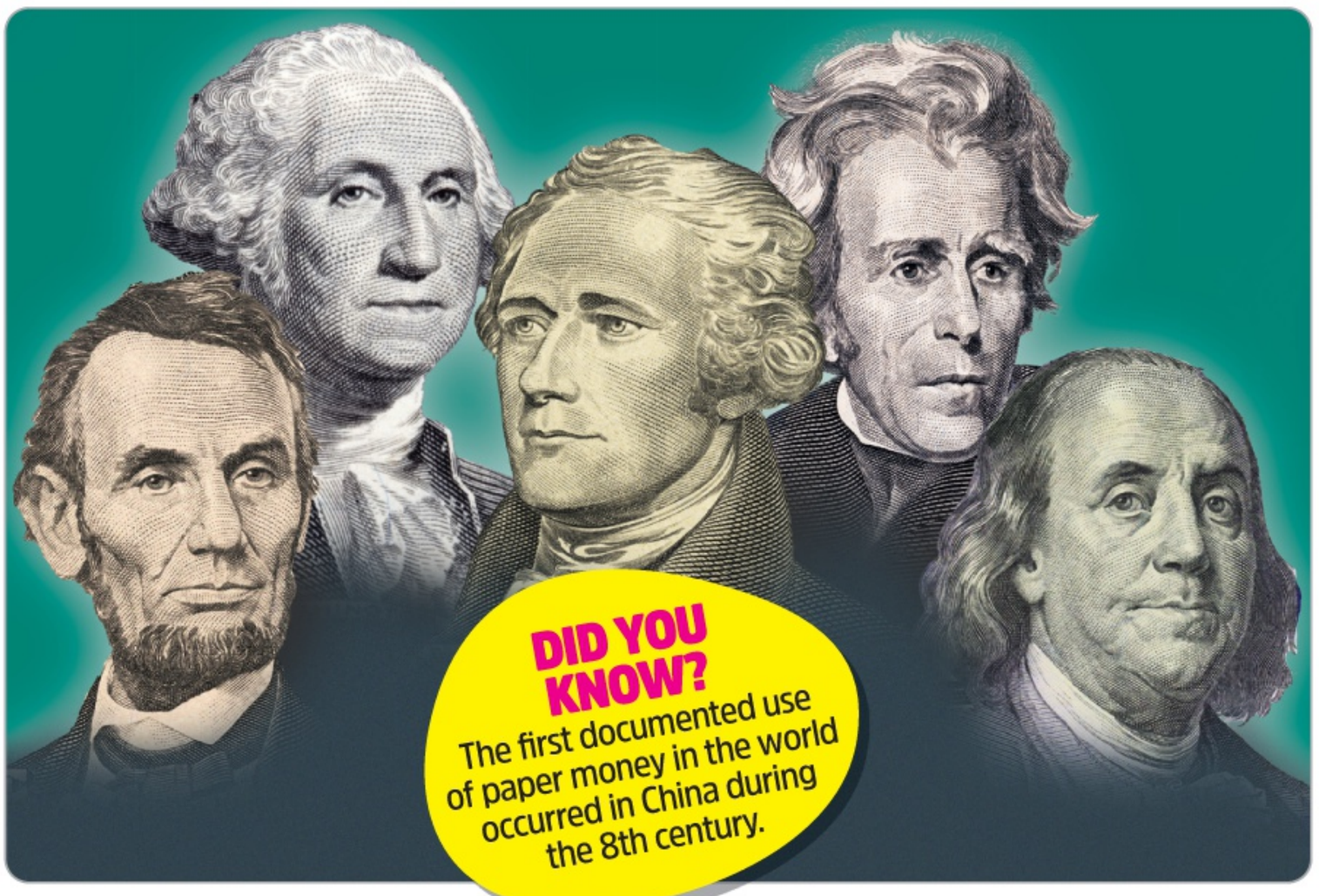
Officials confirmed that at least 72 people have died after a powerful 6.9 magnitude earthquake struck on September 30 near the north coast of Cebu Island. More than 500 people were injured, and about 20,000 residents had to leave their homes. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said he would open a tent city to provide housing for those who lost their homes.

Should paper money get new faces?

US bills have honored the same people for 100 years. Some say it's time for an update.

What you need to know

- American paper money first entered circulation when it was issued by the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1690 to fund military expeditions.
- The Federal Reserve, the US central bank, was established in 1913 and began issuing Federal Reserve notes, the same bills used today, in 1914.
- The US Department of the Treasury oversees the production of money, and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing designs and prints paper currency at two US locations.



DID YOU KNOW?
The first documented use of paper money in the world occurred in China during the 8th century.

American paper money is immediately recognizable by its green color and large portraits of US historical figures on the front: George Washington on the $1 bill, Abraham Lincoln on the $5 bill, Alexander Hamilton on the $10 bill, and Andrew Jackson on the $20 bill. While these Presidents and founders of our nation may have had a significant impact on the country, some people feel it's time to give a new look to US paper money and recognize the contributions of other important Americans, like Harriet Tubman, Martin Luther King Jr., or Eleanor Roosevelt. What do you think? Should paper money get new faces?

Yes—it's time to switch it up

Washington, Lincoln, and Hamilton deserve to be honored, but so do many other people who have affected America since our bills were first introduced. Our country is bigger and more diverse than it was when it was founded. Isn't it time to reflect on that and give us some new heroes on our cash? There currently isn't one woman on our paper money, but the US is about 50% female. That doesn't seem fair, does it? Finally, US quarters get new faces during special programs, like the American Women Quarters series, so isn't it time our paper money caught up? If it's good enough for coins, it's good enough for bills.

No—leave a good thing alone

We wouldn't be here if it weren't for the early leaders who created the US. We've been honoring their contributions for about 100 years, and we shouldn't stop now. It also wouldn't be cost-effective to research, redesign, print, and distribute new paper money. The government already spends more than $1.1 billion a year to print fresh bills using existing designs. And how would we choose which new faces to put on paper money? There are so many historical figures who have made a significant impact on the country, and each American looks up to different people. No matter who was added, someone would be disappointed.

YES Three reasons paper money should get new faces

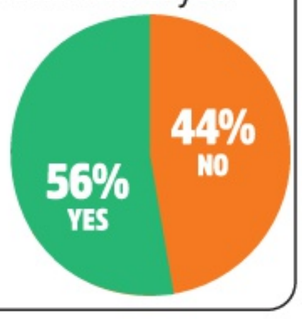
1. **Our country has changed, and many Americans have contributed to its growth. It's time to honor them.**
2. **Half the country is female, but there are no women on paper money. That's not fair.**
3. **Every year, quarters get new faces, like Ida B. Wells and Juliette Gordon Low in 2025. Bills should too.**

NO Three reasons paper money should not get new faces

1. **We've been honoring our founders for 100 years, and we shouldn't stop now.**
2. **It's expensive to print new money with a new design, and that money could be better spent on other important projects.**
3. **There are so many amazing Americans to choose from that it would be impossible to please everyone.**

LAST WEEK'S POLL

Last week, we asked if there should be more Supreme Court justices. More than half of you thought the court should grow: 56% said yes, and 44% said no.



What do you think?

Now that you've read a bit more about this issue, visit kids.theweekjunior.com/polls so you can vote in our debate. Vote YES if you think paper money should get new faces or NO if you don't. We'll publish the results next week.

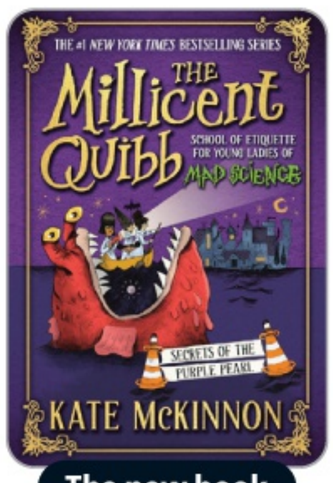
The goal of the big debate is to present two sides of an issue fairly in order to stimulate discussion and allow our readers to make up their minds. The views on this page do not reflect those of *The Week Junior*, and the page is not funded by third parties.

GETTY IMAGES

A life in storytelling

Kate McKinnon brings her love of laughter and learning into her writing.

Comedy actress Kate McKinnon, best known for her work on *Saturday Night Live* (*SNL*) and in the film *Barbie* as Weird Barbie, has spent her career celebrating misfits. Now she is the author of the best-selling middle-grade series *The Millicent Quibb School of Etiquette for Young Ladies of Mad Science*. The series' second book, *Secrets of the Purple Pearl*, has just been published.


THE #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING SERIES
THE Millicent Quibb
SCHOOL OF ETIQUETTE FOR YOUNG LADIES OF MAD SCIENCE
SECRETS OF THE PURPLE PEARL
KATE McKINNON
The new book

McKinnon grew up on Long Island, New York. Her passion for performing was sparked in fifth grade when she tried out for a skit using a British accent—making her classmates laugh and landing her the lead role. At the same time, she fell in love with science as she collected bugs and discovered nature. "Everything I learned was like magic to me," she told *The Week Junior*.

McKinnon went on to earn a theater degree from Columbia University. In 2012, she joined *SNL* and wowed fans with her funny impressions. She won two Emmy Awards for best supporting actress in a comedy series during her 11 seasons.

Inspired by McKinnon's love of science, the Millicent Quibb series follows three sisters at a quirky science middle school. In the new book, they must find a powerful pearl at the bottom of a lake before evil scientists do.

McKinnon hopes the series captures the magic and mystery of that age and the struggle to fit in. "Every person is an oddball in their own way," she said. "If jellyfish had said, 'I better fix how weird I am,' we would not have jellyfish." Her advice to young writers: "Tell the truth about what's in your heart."

Kate McKinnon

TOY WITH A TWIST
After the success of the Barbie film, Mattel turned Kate McKinnon's Weird Barbie character into an official doll.

Continuing a legacy

Isaiah Hand has become the first student at Tuskegee University in Alabama to earn a private pilot's license in nearly 80 years. Hand follows in the tradition of the Tuskegee Airmen, the nation's first Black military pilots, during World War II (1939–1945). Their achievements led to the desegregation of the military, and the program ended in 1949. The university restarted flight training in June to honor them and to address a growing need for pilots. Hand told reporters, "As long as I'm here, their history is going to live on."

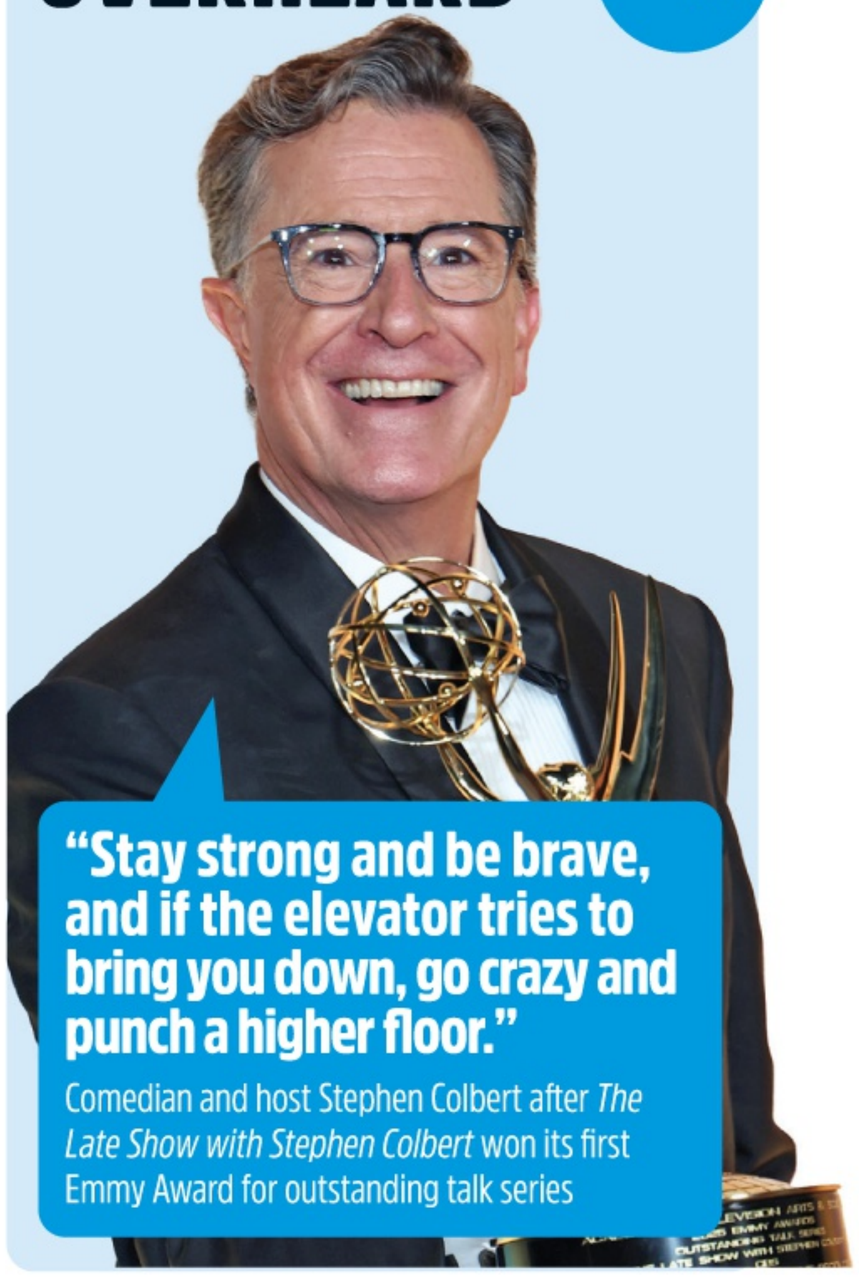
Isaiah Hand

Audrey Samora

A young civic leader

Audrey Samora, a 17-year-old high school senior from San Antonio, Texas, was selected for a Leaders of Tomorrow fellowship from a local nonprofit. She is one of 20 fellows, ages 16 to 24, who will receive a $2,500 grant for their civic engagement, attend city council and school board meetings, and present policy ideas to county leaders on youth issues. Samora was picked for her work with the city's teen mental health program. She said she wants lawmakers to hear from young people. "Our voice matters just as much as anybody else's," she told a local news station.

OVERHEARD



"Stay strong and be brave, and if the elevator tries to bring you down, go crazy and punch a higher floor."

Comedian and host Stephen Colbert after *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* won its first Emmy Award for outstanding talk series

GETTY IMAGES (2); BOOK: COURTESY OF PUBLISHER; COURTESY OF TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY; COURTESY OF UP PARTNERSHIP

FAR OUT! Elephants make deep rumbling sounds. Others can feel them through the ground from miles away.

Elephants are expressive creatures.

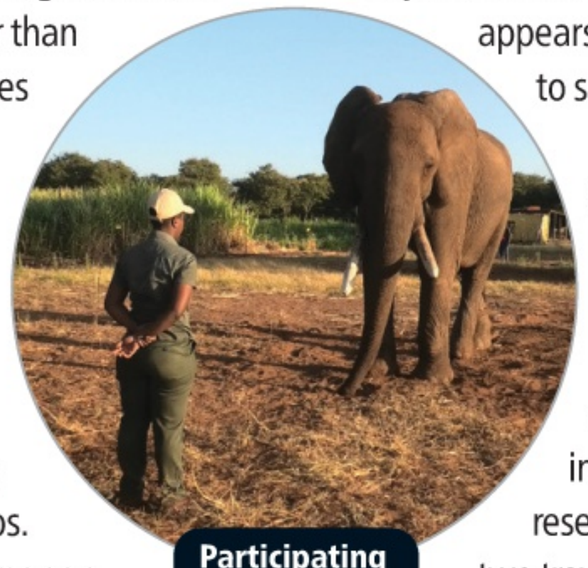
Animals that gesture

Chimpanzees and bonobos have been seen using gestures, such as scratching themselves to show areas of their bodies where they wish to be groomed. Grouper fish shake their bodies to ask giant moray eels to join their hunt, and they do a sort of "headstand" to point out prey.

Scientists decode elephant signs

A recent study has shown that elephants use a range of different gestures to tell others—including humans—when they want something. It's the first time this varied use of gestures has been observed in animals other than primates (the group that includes apes, monkeys, and humans).

A gesture is a movement of the body that expresses an idea without using words. Examples of human gestures include pointing, nodding, shaking your head, or shushing with your finger against your lips. In animals, scientists see gestures as a complex form of communication.



Participating in the study

Elephants communicate in many ways. Previous research has found that they flap their ears and make sounds to say hello to their friends. Their poop also contains chemical signals, which can show other elephants who they are and how they are feeling. Now it appears that elephants can also signal to show they want a person to act.

In this latest study, scientists observed 17 elephants that live in nature reserves in Zimbabwe, Africa. The elephants are free to roam during the day, but they also interact with humans. A researcher showed the elephants two trays: one tray containing six apples, which were a tasty treat for the elephants, and another tray with nothing on it. The elephants gestured to the researcher to show that they wanted the full tray. Some of the elephants waggled their trunks toward the apples or reached in the direction of the researcher.

When the researcher offered them only one apple instead of all six, however, the elephants saw what was happening and gestured for more. They swung their trunks insistently. One elephant grabbed a stick with its trunk and started hitting the ground, and another threw sand at the researcher. In total, the scientists recorded 38 types of gestures.

Researchers plan to continue studying how elephants use body language to communicate. The next step is to discover how they gesture to each other in the wild, when no humans are around. "What are they telling each other?" asked the study's lead author, Vesta Eleuteri from the University of Vienna in Austria.

PLACE OF THE WEEK

Osa Peninsula, Costa Rica

With Pacific beaches on one side and the Golfo Dulce (Sweet Gulf) on the other, the Osa Peninsula is a popular place for snorkeling, scuba diving, and whale watching. Its warm water attracts many animals, including spotted dolphins and migrating humpback whales. The land has attractions, too, such as Corcovado National Park, a rainforest haven for monkeys, sloths, jaguars, and scarlet macaws. During the rainy "green season" from May to November, wildlife flourishes and waterfalls cascade down cliffs. The dry season, from December to April, has sunny weather for hiking.

A scarlet macaw

NO TWO ALIKE
Just like a human's fingerprints, each giraffe's coat pattern is unique to them.

Four giraffe species confirmed

The International Union for Conservation of Nature has confirmed that the giraffe is not one species but four distinct ones: Masai, northern, reticulated, and southern giraffes. Scientists proved this by looking at more than 2,000 giraffes. They studied physical features, such as the shape of their heads and horn-like growths called ossicones, and analyzed DNA (chemical that carries all the information about a living thing).

Knowing the number of species is useful for conservation. All the species live in Africa, but they face different problems.

Masai giraffes, which have leaf-shaped patches on their skin, live in Tanzania and Kenya. Their habitat is being turned into farms. War and hunting threaten northern giraffes in the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, and Uganda. Their lower legs are white, like socks, and males have a prominent third ossicone on their foreheads.

Reticulated giraffes have bright white lines between orange-brown spots and live in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia. Southern giraffes have speckled legs. This species is doing the best, with about 69,000 surviving.

Animal of the week

Bargibant's pygmy seahorse

Scientists have learned how the Bargibant's pygmy seahorse blends in with its habitat. While most seahorses have long snouts, pygmy seahorses' snouts evolved to stay short and squat so they look more like nearby corals.

- **LIFESPAN:** Thought to be 2 years
- **HABITAT:** Gorgonian corals in the Pacific Ocean
- **SIZE:** Up to .94 inches
- **DIET:** Tiny, shrimp-like crustaceans
- **FUN FACT:** Males give birth to the babies, called fry, which are a tiny .07 inches long.

Good week / Bad week

Sumatran rhinos

Experts thought Sumatran rhinos had disappeared from Way Kambas National Park in Indonesia, but sniffer dogs have found evidence of the species' survival. Tests showed that the dogs had discovered Sumatran rhino poop in the park.

Sharks

As oceans become more acidic, scientists found that sharks' teeth are becoming more brittle and vulnerable to breaking. Because sharks rely on biting their prey, weaker teeth could have serious consequences for their survival.

ALAMY; GETTY IMAGES (4); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (4); RSOS

Ask an expert

"How many eggs can a penguin have in a year?"

Adelaide, 8, Ohio

Christa Gaus
Senior manager of animal programs, National Aviary

African penguins, like the ones at the National Aviary, can lay up to two eggs at a time, usually once or twice a year. It can take about 40 days for the eggs to hatch. Then the parents take turns caring for the chicks for a few months until they are old enough to go off on their own.

Do you have a question for an animal expert? Send it to *hello@theweekjunior.com*. Find out more about the National Aviary at aviary.org.

Taking a swing into

Find out how female US golfers formed a league of their own.

The Ladies Professional Golf Association is celebrating 75 years in 2025. It is the nation's longest-running pro women's sports organization.

What is the LPGA?

The LPGA is most famous for running the LPGA Tour, an annual series of golf tournaments that are held throughout the world from January to November. The biggest tournaments on the LPGA Tour are the five major championships (see "The five majors" below). Players who have won four of these in their career have pulled off what is known as a Career Grand Slam. Winning all five is called a Super Career Grand Slam. The LPGA also gives out Player of the Year and Rookie of the Year awards, certifies golf instructors and coaches, and sponsors organizations and foundations aimed at growing the game of women's golf.

ROYAL GAME
Mary, Queen of Scots, who reigned in the 16th century, was the first woman known to regularly play golf.

Leona Maguire of Ireland tees off on the 2024 LPGA Tour at Shadow Creek Golf Course in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Nancy Lopez

Pioneering women

As far back as 1895, female golfers organized tournaments for themselves. Professional golf associations were established in the UK in 1901 and the US in 1916, but these organizations were for men. Finally, in 1950, 13 women founded the LPGA in Wichita, Kansas, and held 14 tournaments that year. A major milestone came in 1963 when Althea Gibson, a tennis trailblazer, became the first Black golfer on the LPGA Tour. Nancy Lopez won the LPGA Championship in 1978 as a rookie sensation, attracting a big fan base to the LPGA.

The five majors

Although the number of LPGA major championships has changed through the years, there are currently five. The oldest, the **US Women's Open**, began in 1946 and is older than the tour itself. This year, Maja Stark won at Erin Hills Golf Course in Wisconsin, which hosted the event for the first time.

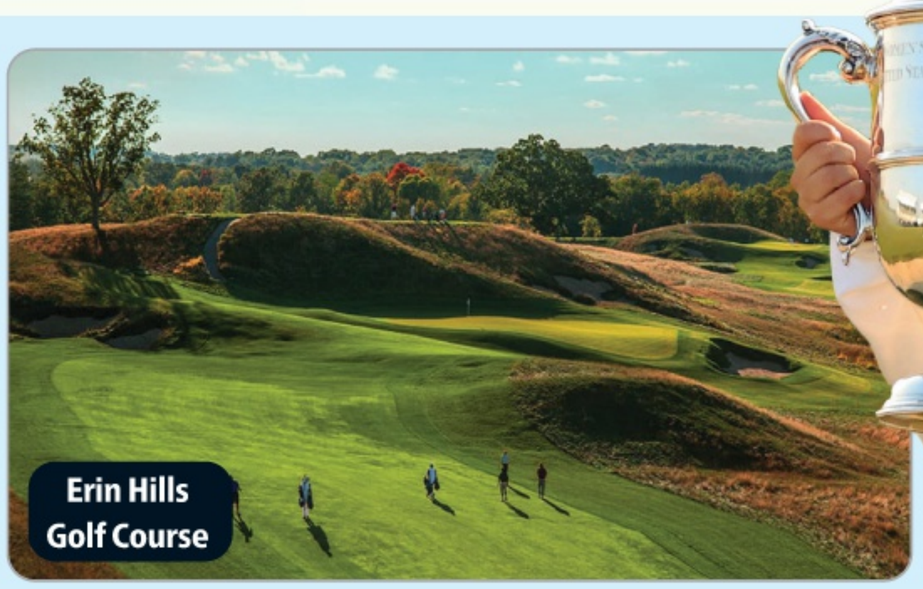
The next major tournament to be launched was the LPGA Championship, which began in 1955 and is now known as the **KPMG Women's PGA Championship**. The third major that takes place in the US, the **Chevron Championship**, has been recognized since 1983.

There are also two LPGA majors held in Europe. The **AIG Women's Open** in the UK was founded in 1976 and recognized as an LPGA major in 2001. The **Amundi Evian Championship**, first recognized in 2013, takes place at a resort in the French Alps every year.

GETTY IMAGES (5); LPGA; COURTESY OF ERIN HILLS

golf history

BREAKING BARRIERS
In 2023, Lexi Thompson became the seventh woman to play in a men's PGA Tour tournament.
WOW!
Lydia Ko is the youngest golfer to win an LPGA Tour event, capturing the Canadian Open title when she was 15 years old.


Erin Hills Golf Course

Maja Stark

Karrie Webb

Legends of the LPGA

Kathy Whitworth has the most LPGA career tournament wins with 88, followed by Mickey Wright with 82, and Annika Sorenstam with 72. Wright also has the distinction of earning the most tournament wins in a single tour season, with 13 in 1963. Among the champions of the major tournaments, Patty Berg has won the most with 15, followed by Wright with 13 and Louise Suggs with 11. Seven women—Suggs, Wright, Pat Bradley, Juli Inkster, Karrie Webb, Sorenstam, and Inbee Park—have achieved a Career Grand Slam. Webb has also earned a Super Career Grand Slam. Sorenstam has won a record eight LPGA Tour Player of the Year awards.

Jeeno Thitikul

The tournament today

The 2025 LPGA Tour began in late January with the Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions in Florida. The schedule includes 33 official events, and it wraps up in late November with the CME Group Tour Championship in Florida. At least 21 players have won a tournament on the tour this season, and a different golfer has won each of the five majors. When *The Week Junior* went to press, the current top-ranked player in the LPGA was Thai golfer Atthaya "Jeeno" Thitikul. She is followed in the rankings by Nelly Korda and Lydia Ko. Korda is also the reigning LPGA Player of the Year, after winning seven tournaments in 2024.

SPECIES COUNT

There are an estimated 539 primate species around the world, mostly split into wet-nosed and dry-nosed groups.

A rendering of an early human ancestor with flexible fingers

Brains and thumbs evolved together

Scientists have believed for many years that humans are unique and have outlived extinct species because we have large brains and agile hands. A new study found the first clear evidence that those traits developed at the same time and exist across all primates (mammals including humans, apes, and monkeys), not just humans.

Researchers in the UK investigated 94 species of living and extinct primates. They found that those with longer thumbs also consistently had larger brains—a group that includes lemurs, monkeys, tarsiers, and apes. The evolution (change taking place over millions of years) of longer thumbs in primates is linked to manual dexterity—the ability to grip and manipulate small objects with precision and use them to perform tasks.

Hands were key to human evolution.

The scientists believe our human ancestors developed manual dexterity first. That trait then drove brain growth because they needed bigger brains to take advantage of all that could be done with their useful hands. "We've always known that our big brains and nimble fingers set us apart, but now we can see they didn't evolve separately," said Joanna Baker, lead author of the study and a scientist at the University of Reading in the UK. "As our ancestors got better at picking up and manipulating objects, their brains had to grow to handle these new skills," Baker said.

Big brains and flexible fingers were key to human evolution, eventually allowing our ancestors to make tools, build fires, and cook food. That, in turn, led to the development of modern society. "These abilities have been fine-tuned through millions of years of brain evolution," Baker said.

The research team predicted that longer thumbs would be linked to growth of the cerebellum, the region of the brain that influences movement and coordination. But they were surprised to find that the thumbs are actually aligned with the neocortex, a large part of the brain connected to cognition (the process of acquiring knowledge), consciousness, and sensory information.

This could mean that longer thumbs are linked to thinking, rather than movement, the team said. They will do more research to understand exactly how the neocortex is linked to manual dexterity. Their work is part of a larger body of research showing that humans share more traits with animals than previously understood.

Tracing evolution with teeth

Some of the teeth

According to a new study, fossilized teeth found in Ethiopia are evidence that different species and branches of hominins (group consisting of modern humans and our extinct ancestors) overlapped with each other in the same place at the same time. The findings reinforced a theory that human evolution did not occur in a straight line from apes to modern humans.

The teeth were found in Ethiopia and are between 2.6 and 2.8 million years old. Three small ones belonged to a branch of hominins that includes modern humans, while larger ones were from relatives of Lucy, an Australopithecus (extinct early hominin) found in Ethiopia 50 years ago. More research is necessary, but the researchers said the teeth could indicate the existence of a previously unknown species of Australopithecus.

Japan unveils an osmotic power plant

A new kind of power plant has been built in Fukuoka, Japan. The osmotic power plant, which makes electricity using salt water and fresh water, is the second one of its kind in the world. The first one was built in Denmark in 2023.

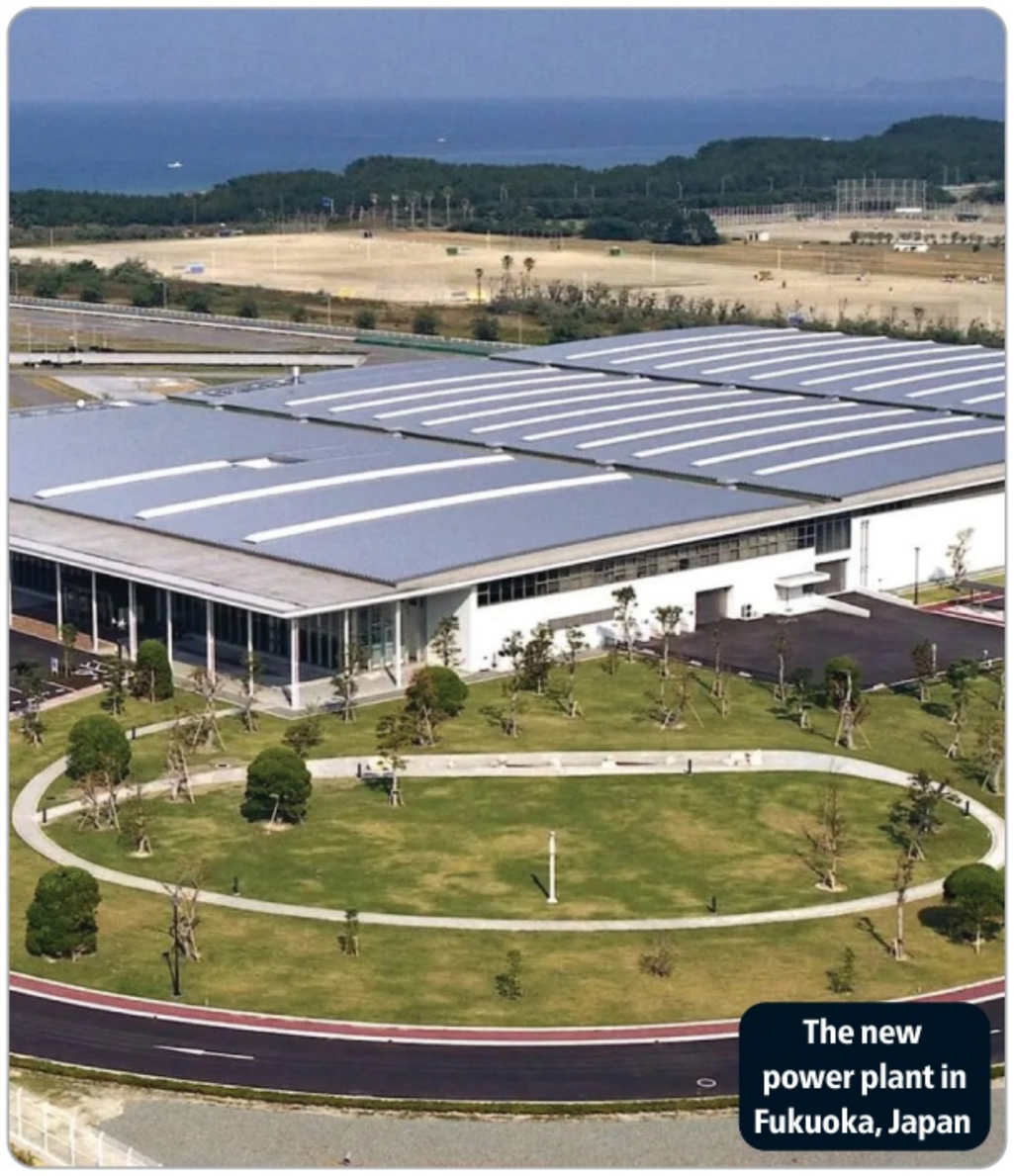
The plant uses osmosis, a process that works like a tea strainer. Salt water and fresh water are separated by a special layer that lets water, but not salt, pass through. Because the fresh water is naturally attracted to the salt in the seawater side, it flows in that direction. As it does, it creates pressure that spins a turbine (engine with blades that turn) to generate electricity.

FAST FACT
An osmotic power plant the size of a soccer field could produce enough electricity to power 30,000 households.

The osmotic power plant works all the time, during the day and night, in rain or sunshine. It also produces no carbon dioxide (greenhouse gas that traps heat in Earth's atmosphere) emissions, making it a cleaner energy source than coal, oil, or gas.

Each year, the plant will generate 880,000 kilowatt hours of electricity, enough to power 220 homes all year long. Initially, the plant will provide power for a nearby desalination (removal of salt from seawater) plant that supplies fresh, drinkable water to the city.

For now, the osmotic process itself uses up a lot of energy, but scientists are working on making it more energy-efficient. Akihiko Tanioka, from the Institute of Science Tokyo, feels positive about the technology. "I hope it spreads not just in Japan but across the world," he said.


The new power plant in Fukuoka, Japan

Cocoa pods contain cocoa beans.

Using science to give chocolate flavor

Many factors influence the flavor of chocolate, including the soil and climate where the cocoa beans it's made from are grown. A new study shows that flavor also develops after cocoa beans are harvested, due to the growth of microbes (tiny organisms like bacteria and fungi).

Scientists tracked microbes in Colombian cocoa beans after they were harvested. They found types of yeast that are used in baking, which helped break down sugar and generate heat. After about 48 hours, bacteria began to form and produced flavorful molecules.

The team replicated the flavor-producing microbes in a lab and applied them to cocoa beans. Expert tasters confirmed that the lab beans had a similar flavor to the original Colombian beans. The findings mean that experts could analyze microbes to predict a chocolate's flavor and even mix microbes to create new flavors.

AMAZING INVENTION

A tiny home that snaps together

The Baby Box

A tiny home on wheels is designed to be set up by one person with no tools in about an hour. The Baby Box, by Boxabl, arrives as a small cube with panels that open up and fasten into place. Its final size is 14 feet 9 inches long, 14 feet 1 inch wide, and 9 feet 3 inches tall.

The Baby Box is easily towed from place to place. Inside, a central area has sitting and lounging space and a sofa that opens into a bed. A kitchen has a refrigerator and induction stove, and the bathroom has a glass-enclosed shower. Boxabl said it will be available soon.

FUKUOKA AREA WATERWORKS AGENCY; MIMI CHU LEUNG; BOXABL; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (2); VILLMOARE

Photos of the week

Out of this world
Rod Prazeres captured this photo of the Rosette Nebula.

Evening glow
Katrina Brown shot this image of salt flats in Death Valley, California.

LUCY YUNXI HU; ROD PRAZERES; SADEQ HAYATI; JILANFENG DAI; KATRINA BROWN

Photos of the week

Natural beauty
This image of the Milky Way over trees in Namibia was taken by Jilanfeng Dai.

Celestial swirl
This picture of the night sky over lupine fields in New Zealand was captured by Lucy Yunxi Hu.

Rainbow bright
Sadeq Hayati took this photo of the northern lights in Iceland.

TOP TEAM
On October 4, the Philadelphia Union clinched the 2025 MLS Supporters' Shield, the award for the best regular-season record.

Nashville SC celebrating

Historic moment

For the first time in history, the on-field referees that officiated the final of the US Open Cup were all female. They were led by Tori Penso (above right). In 2023, the same trio—Penso, Brooke Mayo, and Kathryn Nesbitt—officiated the FIFA Women's World Cup final.

Nashville SC wins US Open Cup

On October 1, the championship match of the 2025 Lamar Hunt US Open Cup was played in Austin, Texas. The US Open Cup is one of the oldest soccer competitions in the world and the oldest in the US. The final featured Nashville SC and Austin FC, two MLS (Major League Soccer) teams that had never made it that far in the competition. Nashville won, 2–1, and claimed the first major trophy in the club's history.

Brian Schwake

The inaugural US Open Cup was held in 1914 and has taken place nearly every year since. In 1999, the event was named after Lamar Hunt, a former soccer team owner who helped create professional leagues in the US. The tournament is different from other big competitions because it is open to amateur and professional clubs at various levels. Most recent champions have been MLS teams, but in 2022, a team from the second-tier USL (United Soccer League) made the final. In 1999, the winner was a team from the A-League, a lower division. Los Angeles FC won last year.

This year's tournament began in March with 96 teams: 64 came from professional leagues, and 32 were amateur clubs. On March 19, four amateur teams pulled off surprising upsets over professional opponents. MLS teams began competing during the Round of 32.

The final was the first time Austin and Nashville played each other in a competitive match this season. Nashville forward Hany Mukhtar opened the scoring in the 17th minute. Three minutes later, Austin was awarded a penalty kick after a foul inside the penalty box by Nashville goalkeeper Brian Schwake. Not long after that, he made a great save to deny Austin the game-tying goal. But just before halftime, Austin's Myrto Uzuni made it 1–1.

Early in the second half, Nashville earned a penalty kick and Sam Surridge converted it successfully. His team retook the lead and held on for the victory. Schwake played a major role in the win, saving seven shots.

As a result of the victory, Nashville has earned a spot in the 2026 Concacaf Champions Cup, a tournament for top clubs from North America, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

THIS WEEK'S WINNERS...

FOOTBALL

There were two big upsets in the NFL on October 5. In one game, the undefeated Buffalo Bills fell to the New England Patriots, 23–20. The Patriots hit a game-winning field goal with 15 seconds left to play. Meanwhile, the Denver Broncos came from behind to take down the Philadelphia Eagles, last season's Super Bowl champions, 21–17. It was the Eagles' first loss. There are no undefeated teams left this season.

Louisville volleyball players

FORMULA 1

On October 5, two McLaren drivers placed in the top four at the Singapore Grand Prix, earning the F1 team enough points to claim its second straight Constructors' Championship, the title for the best team of the season.

COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL

In a major matchup on October 5, the University of Louisville, who were ranked sixth in the NCAA, beat fourth-ranked Stanford University, three sets to one.

DID YOU KNOW?
Flag football was invented by US soldiers during World War II more than 80 years ago.

The US Women's National Flag Football Team

Major news in flag football

Flag football will be one of the sports played at the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles, California—and on October 2, Roger Goodell, commissioner of the NFL (National Football League), gave fans and players something else to be excited about. During a sports business conference in London, England, he announced that the NFL will launch professional flag football leagues for men and women in the "next couple of years."

The sport's popularity is on the rise in the US, especially among girls and women. According to the International Federation of American Football, 2.4 million kids under age 17 play on organized teams. Flag football is also growing as an intercollegiate sport at colleges across the country. Around the world, approximately 20 million people in 100 countries play the sport too.

The US has top men's and women's national teams that participate in global competitions. In 2024, they both won gold at the 2024 IFAF Flag Football World Championships. This summer, the US women's team won silver at the World Games.

To help spotlight the sport, the NFL's Buffalo Bills hosted a scrimmage (practice game) between the US Women's National Flag Football Team and Canada's national team during halftime of their game on October 5. The US rallied from an early deficit to win on the second-to-last play.

NFL players will be allowed to be on the US men's flag football team at the Olympics, but their participation will be limited. For example, only one player per NFL team will be able to participate. Other spots will be filled by top flag football players and national team members.

COACH OF THE WEEK

Coach's Name: **Megan Sisson**

Team: **Ely Nordic Wolves (skiing)**

"Megan is the best coach! She makes skiing, which is a super physically demanding sport, so fun. She always asks for our input on how to make practice and training better, and she always encourages us to push ourselves. She has the most fun activities to help us work on technique. Megan always has bad dad jokes to tell us on the start line, and I think that is what makes me race faster. We've all become amazing skiers because of her." Siiri,13, Minnesota

To nominate a Coach of the Week, send your coach's name, photo, sport, and team to *hello@theweekjunior.com.* Include your name, age, state, and a few reasons why your coach is great.

SPOTLIGHT ON...

Johnny Goode

AGE: 23 SPORT: TRACK AND FIELD
TEAM: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

Path to success I played football in high school. One of the coaches wanted me to run track so I could get in a little extra training and weight room time. I did that, but after I graduated, I thought I was done being an athlete. Then I went to a junior college, and a friend who had joined the track team there told the coach to give me a call. I joined, ran for a few years, went to another college, then eventually got into Cal. I had a great first season during the last school year. My biggest accomplishment is coming from a small high school in a really small town and setting records at a Division I level.

Staying active My specialty is sprints. I practice two to three hours a day, five or six days a week. I have a physical lifestyle. I sometimes surf. I like to play pickup basketball, soccer, or something with my friends. I'm always in the weight room, too.

Big moment Over the summer, I competed at US Nationals. It was surreal. When I was in junior college, I used to try to match the form of guys who were US Olympians, national champions, and top Division I runners. I had progressed so far over the past four years that I was on the track with them.

Wise words After a loss, my coach always said, we don't take L's, we take the lessons. I always keep that with me. In life, if you have one bad day, that doesn't mean that's who you are. Also, if you triumph in something, it doesn't mean you're the greatest on the planet. Just take that as a lesson and keep yourself level-headed.

EMMA CORONA/BUFFALO BILLS; CAL ATHLETICS (2); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (3); LOUISVILLE ATHLETICS

The Twits

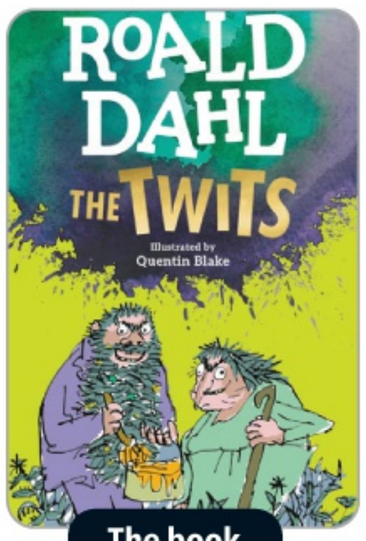
FUN FACT
Roald Dahl co-wrote the screenplay for the 1968 film Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.

A new Roald Dahl adventure

The famous author's beloved book *The Twits* has been turned into a new animated film coming to Netflix.

Author Roald Dahl is famous for writing books with eccentric characters and imaginative plots, such as *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *The BFG*. In 2021, Netflix acquired the company that owned the author's work and made plans to share his stories in new ways. On October 17, it will release the first animated film based on Dahl's popular book *The Twits*.

Published in 1980, the book is about a messy couple, Mr. and Mrs. Twit, who play pranks on each other and mistreat their pet monkeys, called Muggle-Wumps. Phil Johnston, the film's writer, director, and producer, said *The Twits* was his favorite childhood book. "I recall feeling naughty reading it," he told *The Week Junior*.



The book

The book is mostly short scenes with silly pranks, so Johnston built a bigger story around the couple. In the film, the Twits run a hazardous amusement park, Twitlandia. When they take over the local town, two brave orphans, Beesha and Bubsy, team up with the Muggle-Wump family to outsmart them. Beesha is a new character created for the film.

Many of Dahl's stories center on a heroic child, and Johnston wanted the movie to do that, too. "I'm interested in kids who are seeing the world we live in today and feeling small," he said. Beesha learns to believe in herself through her experience.

Johnston said *The Twits*' animation style is "weird" and "beautiful" to match the quirky tale. It tells a funny and wild story but also teaches a lesson about understanding others and how that can help make the world a better place. "It's easy to get angry and to hate, but empathy takes real work," he said. "You have to slow down and think about someone else's feelings, and that includes awful people—like the Twits."

3 more Dahl adaptations

James and the Giant Peach

Henry Selick, who directed *The Nightmare Before Christmas* and *Coraline*, made this 1996 live-action and stop-motion film. It follows orphan James who moves in with his mean aunts and befriends talking critters inside a giant peach.

Matilda

This 1996 live-action film is about a brilliant girl who uses telekinesis (the ability to control objects with your mind) to stand up to her cruel parents and terrifying headmistress. The story also was turned into a stage musical and a movie musical.

Fantastic Mr. Fox

In 2009, award-winning director Wes Anderson put his own spin on this Dahl story. The stop-motion animation film tells the tale of Mr. Fox's attempt to outwit three greedy farmers to protect his family and friends.

ARTISTIC SIGNATURE
Alexander Calder painted many of his sculptures a shade of orange-red that became known as Calder Red.

City garden pairs art and nature

A new art institution dedicated to Alexander Calder, a famous American modern artist, recently opened in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Calder Gardens has his works displayed in calming gardens and meadows as well as in a newly constructed building within the area.

Calder was born in Philadelphia and lived from 1898 to 1976. He had a degree in engineering and, as an artist, was interested in motion and space. He became known for developing moving sculptures called mobiles. He also made large stabiles (abstract, stationary sculptures), paintings, and drawings. Calder stabiles are on public display in Chicago, Illinois; Grand Rapids, Michigan; and other cities.

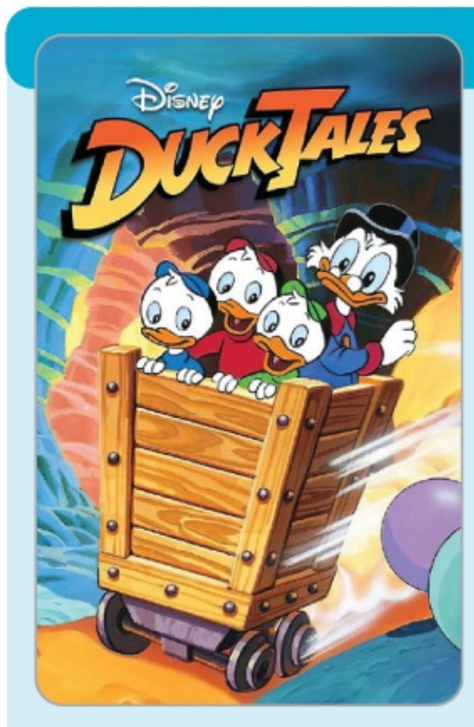
Alexander Calder

Calder's grandson, Alexander S.C. Rower, is the president of the Calder Foundation. He helped develop the project and said his grandfather's passion for ecology (the relationship of living things to their environment) is reflected in the outdoor space. There are seven garden areas with more than 250 varieties of plants. The spaces were designed to look wild, and most of the plants are perennials, so they bloom and return each year.

"Visitors will experience art and nature in dynamic harmony—an active event, constantly changing," Rower said.

Unlike traditional museums, Calder Gardens does not have informational labels near the artwork. "It isn't designed to be an art history lesson or to function as a traditional museum," Rower said. "It is just you and Calder's work." He said the hope is that after visitors spend time with his grandfather's pieces, they "will cultivate new perspectives not only on the art but also on the world around them—and their unique place within it."

READER RECOMMENDS



DuckTales *(Disney+)*

"This animated series is a reboot of a show that ran in the 1980s. It follows a set of duck triplets. Huey, the oldest, is very wise; Dewey, the middle one, is very funny; and Louie, the youngest, who is my favorite, dreams of becoming rich. When their uncle, Donald Duck, has to go away for work, he drops them off at the mansion of their great-uncle Scrooge McDuck, the richest duck in the world. Scrooge is also a famous treasure hunter, and he takes Huey, Dewey, and Louie on exciting adventures. It is really funny and fun to watch with your family." Jacob, 11, Pennsylvania

Do you have a film or TV show to recommend to other kids? Send your review to *hello@theweekjunior.com*.

THIS WEEK'S WATCH LIST

Lucky Dog: Down Under
(Paramount+) (CBS) Saturday mornings

On the series *Lucky Dog*, animal trainer Brandon McMillan works with shelter dogs and finds them loving homes. This new spin-off follows McMillan in Australia, where the animals he meets include an energetic kelpie and a deaf cattle dog.

Halloween Wars
(HBO Max)

In this series, teams of cake decorators, candy makers, and pumpkin carvers are challenged to build edible Halloween-themed displays. The spooky creations include the boogeyman's lair and monsters made with school snacks. If they impress the judges, they can win $25,000.

The Voice
(Peacock) (NBC) Mondays at 8 p.m. ET

The hit singing competition has returned with coaches Reba McEntire, Michael Bublé, Niall Horan, and Snoop Dogg. New elements include artist-chosen battle partners and fan voting to select which *Voice* performer will appear in the famous Rose Parade on New Year's Day.

CALDER FOUNDATION, NEW YORK/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK. PHOTO BY IWAN BAAN; GETTY IMAGES; DISNEY; LITTON ENTERTAINMENT; WARNER BROS. DISCOVERY, INC.; TRAE PATTON/NBC; ON LEFT PAGE: NETFLIX; BOOK: COURTESY OF PUBLISHER; ALAMY (3)

RACE BASE
The oldest operating motor speedway in the world is the Milwaukee Mile in Wisconsin.

Sonic Racing: CrossWorlds

A speedy game starring Sonic

Sonic Racing: CrossWorlds is a new arcade kart racing game. It was recently released for the Nintendo Switch, PlayStation platforms, Xbox systems, and PC. It will also be available for the Nintendo Switch 2 later this year.

Over the years, there have been many racing games starring the Blue Blur and his buddies. The most recent one was Team Sonic Racing, which came out in 2019. CrossWorlds includes a lot of new characters and gameplay features. The action begins with 24 available racers, including Sonic and other franchise regulars like Tails, Knuckles, Dr. Eggman, and Shadow. Over time, Sega will make up to 50 different characters playable in the game. Expect guest appearances from icons such as SpongeBob SquarePants and the video game character Mega Man.

SpongeBob SquarePants

In CrossWorlds, each racer can choose from four types of base vehicles and also use parts from them to create custom rides. There are 39 racetracks to choose from, most taken from Sonic games, but you can also zip around locations that include a Minecraft world and a level from Pac-Man. Mastering every type of environment and having a multi-functional kart is key because in most of the racing modes, you're transported to a new course for the second lap of every race. The leader at the end of the first lap chooses the CrossWorld.

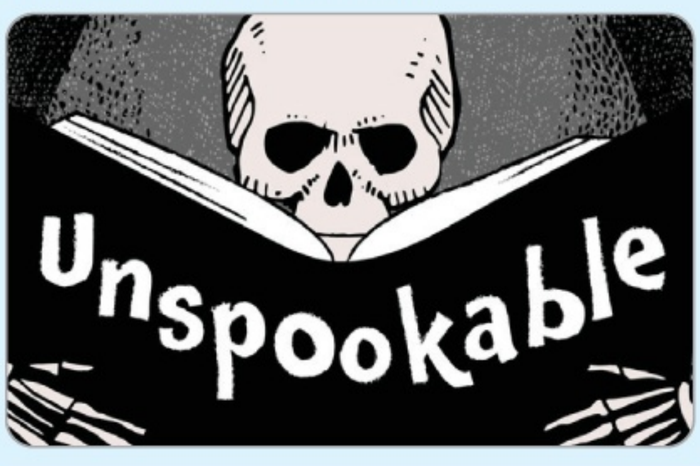
There are several game modes, which provide a variety of ways to compete. Even if you aren't racing against anyone locally or online, in Grand Prix mode you'll be assigned a rival driver, which gives the action an entertaining and motivating twist.

PODCAST OF THE WEEK

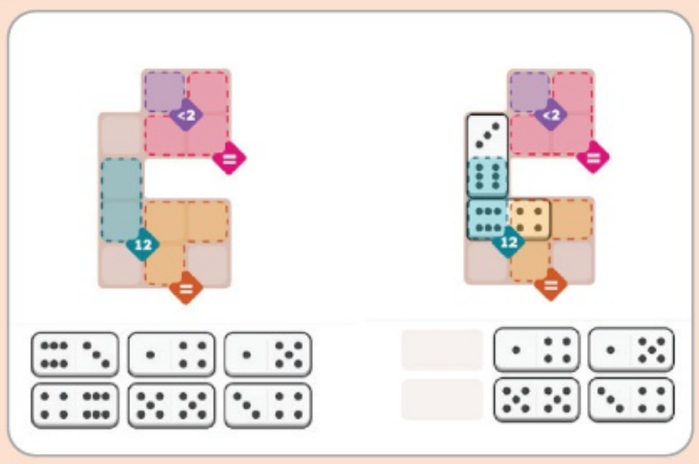
UNSPOOKABLE

Major podcast platforms

The host of this long-running, family-friendly weekly series uses history and science to explore the truth behind scary stories, myths, and monsters. The latest season covers Medusa, Godzilla, and legendary figures from Canadian and Mexican folklore.



GAME OF THE WEEK



PIPS

nytimes.com/games/pips

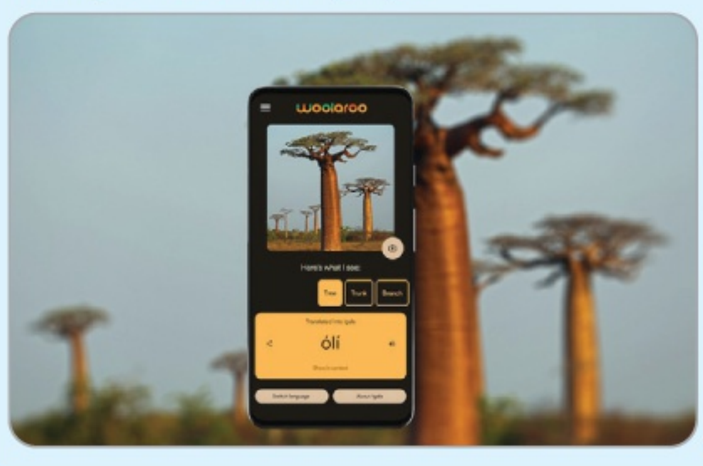
The New York Times has released a new daily puzzle game featuring dominoes. There are three difficulty levels, and in each one you are presented with a board covered in clues that relate to the pips (dots) on a set of tiles. The goal is to move all your dominoes into the correct places.

WEBSITE OF THE WEEK

WOOLAROO

tinyurl.com/TWJUS-Woolaroo

On this Google Arts & Culture site, you can find out about languages from around the world that are at risk of disappearing, such as Louisiana Creole or Yiddish. With the site's machine learning feature, you can capture an image and learn the word for the object in several languages.



SEGA (2); SOUNDSINGTON MEDIA; THE NEW YORK TIMES GAMES; GOOGLE ARTS & CULTURE

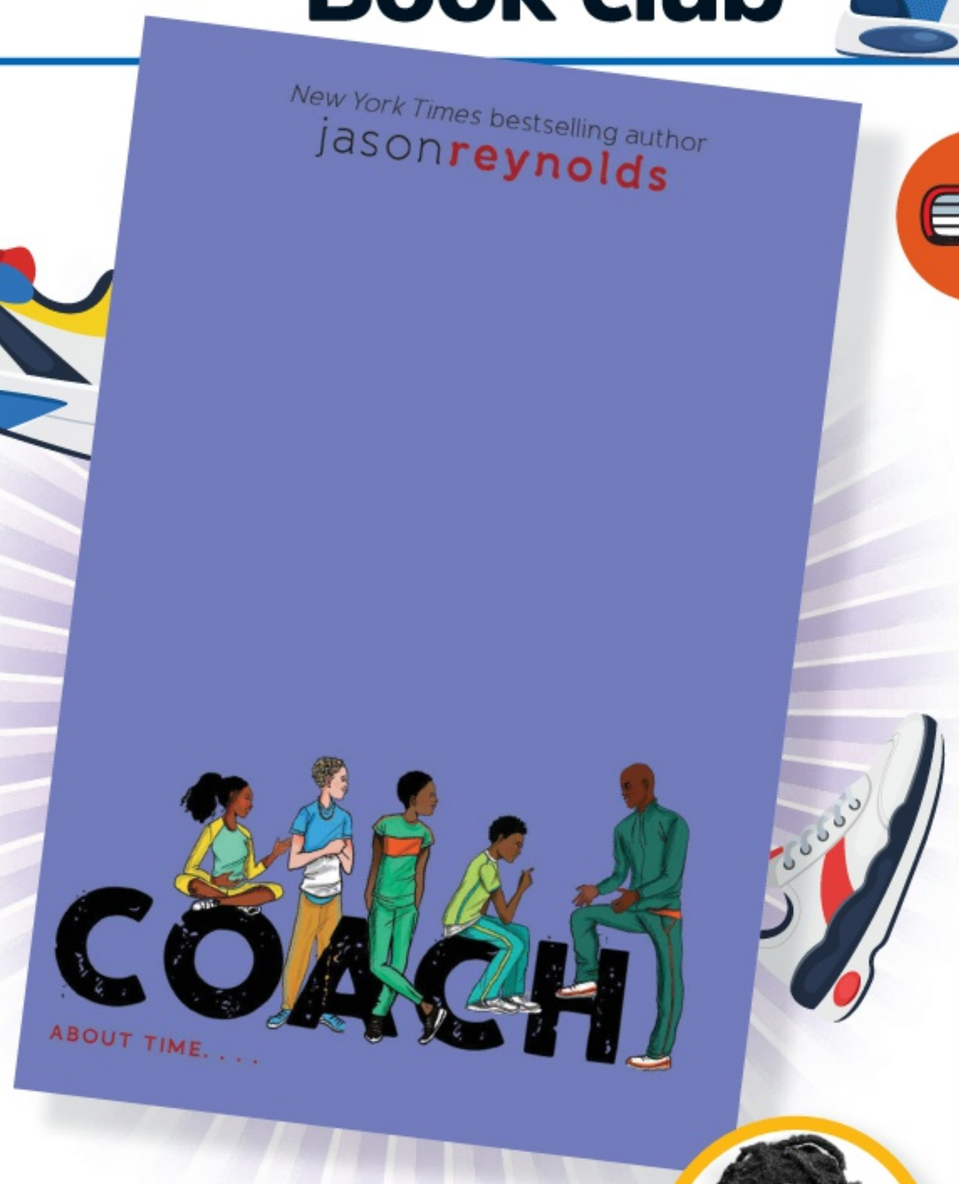
BOOK OF THE WEEK

Coach

By Jason Reynolds

(Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy Books)

The latest installment of the fast-paced *Track* series is a prequel that takes place about 30 years before the events of the other four books. It's 1988, and Otie, who is the coach of the Defenders track team in the first four books, is 12 years old and has just decided he wants to join the Defenders. He's looking for an escape from his gang-filled neighborhood and is a big fan of US athlete Carl Lewis, one of the world's greatest track-and-field stars of all time. A man who once recruited Lewis is coming to visit the Defenders, and Otie hopes the meeting will be just what he needs to set him on the path to achieving his own Olympic goals. Unfortunately, Otie struggles through his tryout for the Junior Olympics. He also has to navigate the sudden return of his frequently absent father, bullying from a classmate, and the sinister actions of a criminal known as Biscuit. Can he juggle all these problems and still be a track-and-field dynamo? The author, Jason Reynolds, masterfully creates a novel that fills in events alluded to in the prior books, yet this story also stands on its own. In addition, Reynolds finds ways to lighten the tone without shying away from heavy topics. *Ages 10 and up*



ASK THE AUTHOR

Jason Reynolds

We spoke to the author of the Book of the Week.

Is Otie based on anyone?
He is based on a coach I had growing up. I knew nothing about his life, but writing this book allowed me to imagine who he might have been.

Any surprises when writing it?
Writing historical fiction is tricky. The book is set in 1988, and I worked hard to add certain details that I felt were part of that time period but wouldn't alienate kids who would be reading it today.

Should kids read the other books in the series first?
If you were to read it without having read the other books, it's still just a good story about a kid who's trying to jump higher than his father.

Did you play sports as a child?
I played basketball, wrestled, and ran track. I loved sports. I still love sports.

Favorite thing about fall?
The colors—it's when nature really shows off.

READER RECOMMENDS

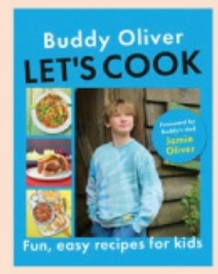
Wishtree *By Katherine Applegate*

"This book is about a tree named Red, who is the local wishtree. This is where people make wishes, write them down on paper, and then put them on the tree. When a new girl moves into the neighborhood, Red wants to help her fulfill her wish for a friend. This book was truly great, and I enjoyed exploring the meaning of love within it." Riley, 12, Virginia

Do you have a book to recommend? Send your review to *hello@theweekjunior.com*.

4 cookbooks with fun and simple recipes

Aprons on! These new picks feature delicious dishes to make and share.



Let's Cook: Fun, Easy Recipes for Kids

By Buddy Oliver

(Appetite by Random House)

Buddy Oliver, the 14-year-old son of award-winning chef Jamie Oliver, has been cooking for most of his life. The more than 60 easy-to-make dishes in his new cookbook include One-Cup Pancakes and Quick Fruity Froyo. *Ages 8 and up*

My First Recipe Book

By Ricardo Larrivée

(Appetite by Random House)

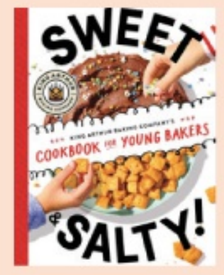
A mix of photos and whimsical illustrations, this book is a lot of fun to read. You'll learn the secret to making applesauce pink (spoiler: Add some apple peel), how to give ramen noodles a cheesy twist, and more. The book's bubble tea recipe is also epic. *Ages 8 and up*

Rebel Girls Make Dessert

By the Rebel Girls Team

(Ten Speed Press)

Kids tested this book's 80-plus recipes. Some, like Cereal Treats Your Way, are great for after-school snacking, while others, such as Dutch Apple Pie, are perfect to end a special meal. It also has fun facts about the accomplishments of female chefs throughout history. *Ages 8 and up*



Sweet & Salty!

By King Arthur Baking Company (Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers)

This book contains more than 40 sweet recipes, such as Fudge Cupcakes. It also teaches budding bakers how to make dozens of savory favorites, including Pizza Party Buns. Recipes come in three skill levels, making the book usable for kids of all ages. *Ages 8 and up*

BOOKS: COURTESY THE PUBLISHERS; AUTHOR: ADEDAYO KOSOKO; GETTY IMAGES

BUSY BRAIN

Benjamin Franklin, a founder of the US, famously made many lists of his projects, activities, and goals.

Take charge of your day

Make doing everything you need to get done a little easier with these tips.

The term "executive function" refers to skills that help you solve problems, use time wisely, and make decisions. It can also help you feel more in control about the things you need to do, whether it's a homework assignment or straightening up your room. Here's how to improve your executive function skills to get more done.

Take small steps

For many people, just getting started is the hardest step toward achieving a task. Start by identifying one small step you can take that will make a difference. For example, if your challenge is a messy room, gather empty glasses and plates and put them in the dishwasher. Your room probably looks a little better already! Next, pick up clothing that's been gathering on a chair and hang it up. Then put pens and pencils in a cup, and recycle loose papers.

Break it down

Dedicate a window of time in your week to do a big project. You can probably do anything if it's just for 20 minutes. Set a timer and go. Take a break for 10 minutes, then set the timer again for 15 more minutes to work on your goal.

Pair tasks with something fun

If you have to accomplish a task that you're not excited about, make it more enjoyable by combining it with something you do like. For example, play music or an audiobook while you rake leaves. You could also recruit a partner, even if it's virtually—call a friend and clean out your cluttered backpacks together.

Personalize your organization

The best "system" that will help you stay organized is the one that works for you. You might find that keeping a notebook, where you write down your checklist each day, is easier than juggling multiple sticky notes. Enjoy the satisfaction of crossing items off your list as you get them done!

Create a list to stay on track.

Be kind to yourself

Learning executive function skills takes practice. If you forget or lose something, speak kindly to yourself the way you might to a friend who made a mistake. One small study suggests that people who practice kindness toward themselves reduce stress. It may feel silly at first, but repeat statements like, "You're doing the best you can, and that's enough."

Literary list makers

These fictional characters show more ways of being organized!

Hermione Granger of the *Harry Potter* books by J.K. Rowling gives her pals Harry and Ron magical homework planners that shout reminders like, "Do it today or later you'll pay!"

Greg Heffley In the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series by Jeff Kinney, Greg scribbles pros and cons lists, the social pecking order at middle school, and more.

Mia Tang Ten-year-old Mia of *The Front Desk* series by Kelly Yang works at her parents' motel. She keeps guests' requests in a notebook and solves problems by writing.

WOW!
The largest dog biscuit ever made weighed 1,136 pounds and took eight bakers to create.

WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the oven.

Bake up a batch of buttery biscuits

Ingredients

- 3 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 2½ teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- 1½ teaspoons sugar
- 9 tablespoons cold unsalted butter
- 1 cup buttermilk
- Jam, for serving

Instructions

1. Heat the oven to 400° F. Stir together the flour, salt, baking powder, baking soda, and sugar in a large bowl. Dice 8 tablespoons of the butter into small cubes, then use a pastry cutter to cut them into the flour mixture until it resembles coarse sand. (Tip: If you don't have a pastry cutter, you can also blend the butter into the flour by cutting it in a crisscross motion with two butter knives.)
2. Drizzle the buttermilk over the flour mixture. Use a wooden spoon to stir it together until it forms a rough dough. Do not knead.
3. Pat the dough into a ½-inch-thick rectangle. Use a butter knife to cut it into three equal pieces, then stack them like a tower and shape into a rectangle. Pat the dough into a ½-inch-thick rectangle once more.
4. Use a 3-inch round cookie cutter to cut dough into biscuits. Gather and re-roll the dough as needed. Put biscuits on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
5. Melt the remaining 1 tablespoon butter and brush it onto the biscuits. Bake until golden brown on the top and bottom, about 15 to 20 minutes, rotating pan halfway through. Serve with jam. Makes about 10 biscuits.

ECO TIP OF THE WEEK: PLANT TULIP BULBS FOR SPRING FLOWERS

Fall is the perfect time of year to plant tulip bulbs, when the ground is cool but not yet frozen. The bulbs will produce flowers in spring, providing food for pollinators like bees. To get started, visit a nursery to select bulbs in the colors you like best. You can plant them in a sunny spot in the ground or in a container with drainage holes. Read the labels on your bulbs to determine how deep a hole to dig, and plant each bulb with the pointy end facing up. Space bulbs a few inches apart, with taller bulbs in the rear and shorter bulbs in front. Cover with soil and water after planting. Water again only when the soil feels dry. Then wait for a burst of blooms in the spring!

Plan now for beautiful blooms.

JOY HOWARD; GETTY IMAGES; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES

Keyword crossword

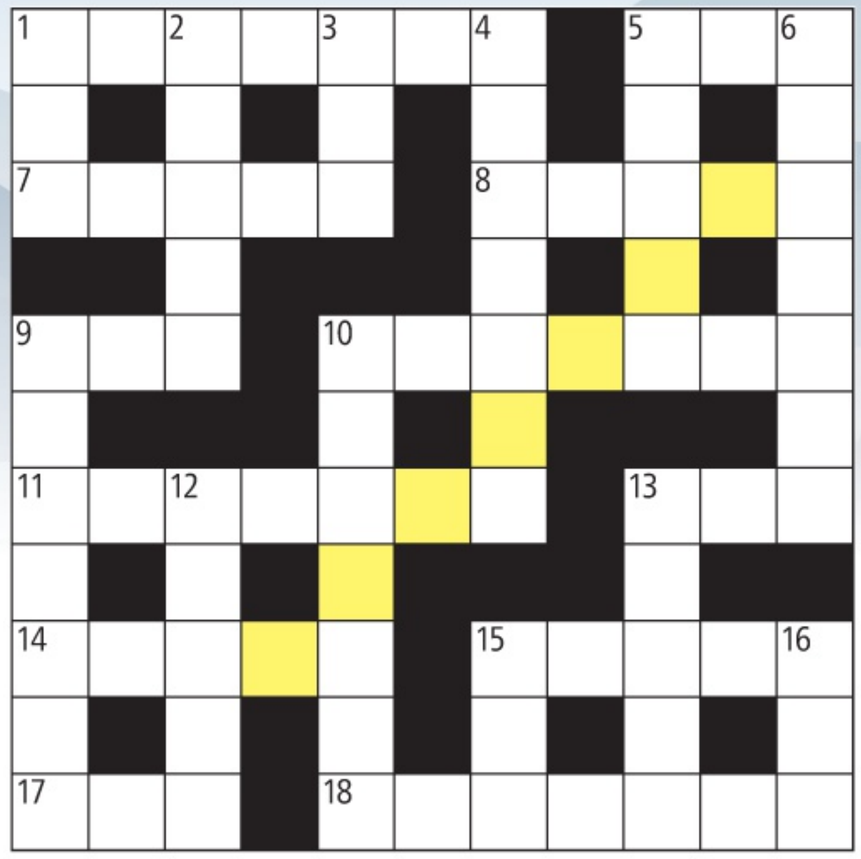
Once you have completed the crossword, transfer the letters in the yellow boxes, diagonally from top to bottom, into the boxes below to get the answer to the Keyword question.

ACROSS

1 Topic concerned with clothing trends
5 Wait and ___ (don't jump to conclusions)
7 The main part of a tree
8 It's worn by an outfielder
9 Obstacle on a rain-soaked hiking path
10 Covered structure that provides protection from wind and rain
11 Envious of what other people have
13 Animal on a milk carton
14 Green ogre in a series of funny films
15 Its coat resembles a barcode
17 It's "oui" in French and "sí" in Spanish
18 Large, spotted cat

DOWN

1 In good physical shape
2 Kind of sea creature that lives next door to SpongeBob
3 It flows from a pen
4 Little chunks of gold or chicken
5 Part of a pump where the water comes out
6 Face part that some people can raise one at a time
9 "Your ___" (way to address royalty)
10 Gear to help a swimmer breathe underwater
12 Measurement units for the size of farms
13 Highly poisonous snake with a hood
15 Where you might find the answers to 15-Across, 18-Across, and 13-Down
16 Instruction represented by a plus sign



Keyword question: What kind of bird can fly the highest, even as high as planes fly?

CODE CRACKER

ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 29.

In this coded list of national parks, every letter has been replaced with a substitute. The same substitutions are used throughout the list. Hint: Every X here is an uncoded Y. Use the letter patterns you find to crack the code. (NEED ANOTHER HINT? Check the bottom of the page.)

J D J C B S M Z J V
X F V J I P Q J
B C M H Z T M H X F H
X J S S F K V Q F H J

THREE FOR ALL

Sort this list into three familiar three-part phrases, like THREE-RING CIRCUS or SALT LAKE CITY.

SHOW FOR BABY UP TAKING
LANDING STEPS EARLY CLEARED

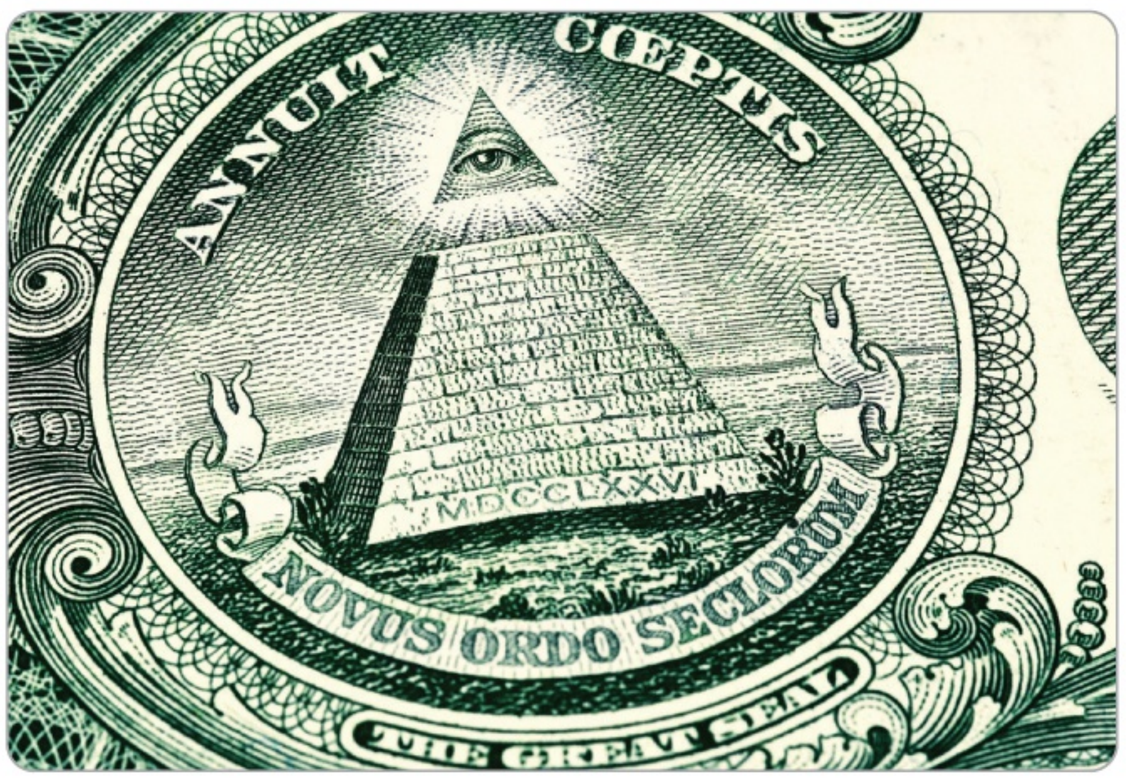
Cutting room

Divide this grid into five sections so each section consists of five adjacent boxes containing the numbers 1–5. The sections may have different shapes.

1	4	2	3	5
5	2	5	2	1
2	3	1	3	4
4	5	2	5	4
3	1	3	1	4

Spot the difference

These two pictures of a dollar bill appear to be the same, but take a closer look. There are actually five differences. Can you see them?



PUZZLES BY PUZZABILITY

Code cracker hint: Every H here is an uncoded N.

That's unbelievable!

Read-y to blast off

Tiny book to go to the Moon

Artist Evan Lorenzen is taking literature to a new level with *Moon Bound*, a tiny book that will be launched into space by 2026. The project is led by a group whose goal is to send an art gallery of 100 works to the Moon. Because transporting material to space costs about $100,000 per pound, the book had to be less than 1 cubic centimeter in size. Lorenzen's mini marvel contains images and text about the Moon from 40 contributors, and its paper and ink have been designed to last up to 400 years in space.

They caught the record.

Keeping their eyes on the ball

People had a ball at Yogi Berra Stadium in New Jersey during the world's largest game of catch. On what would have been the 100th birthday of former New York Yankees catcher Yogi Berra, thousands of fans gathered to honor him and achieve the record. Following the ground rules—no rolling the ball, no looking at phones, no selfies—1,179 pairs tossed baseballs back and forth for five minutes straight. Organizer Eve Schaenen said the event helped people connect with each other, and "that's a beautiful thing."

A big bunch of baby buggies

Super stroller collection is sold

A pair of great-grandparents in England have built up a collection of more than 50 vintage strollers that recently sold for more than $2,500 at auction. Shirley Bromwich, who owns the collection with her husband, Brian, said she loved strollers as a child and first bought one for her son in 1960. Brian has a passion for cars but said he now appreciates strollers too. The oldest model they owned is from 1878. The collection also includes a French stroller made in the 1930s that looks like an old-fashioned car.

Real or fake?

Did she noodle around on board?

Making fresh pasta on a plane

Social media influencer Katie Brooks went viral when she made fresh pasta from scratch while sitting in her seat on an airplane. Brooks filmed herself making the pasta—mixing ingredients in a bowl, then rolling and cutting the dough into shapes—and posted a video online. Although some people enjoyed the video, other commenters said making pasta on a plane was messy, unhygienic, and inconsiderate to Brooks' fellow passengers. Is this story real, or is it an im-pasta-ble lie?*

*Real! Katie Brooks made pasta on the plane, although she didn't actually cook it there. The video of her mixing and rolling the pasta on the flight has gotten more than 598,000 likes on social media.

EVAN LORENZEN; THOMAS E. FRANKLIN; GETTY IMAGES (4); HANSONS AUCTIONEERS; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES; NPS

Your turn

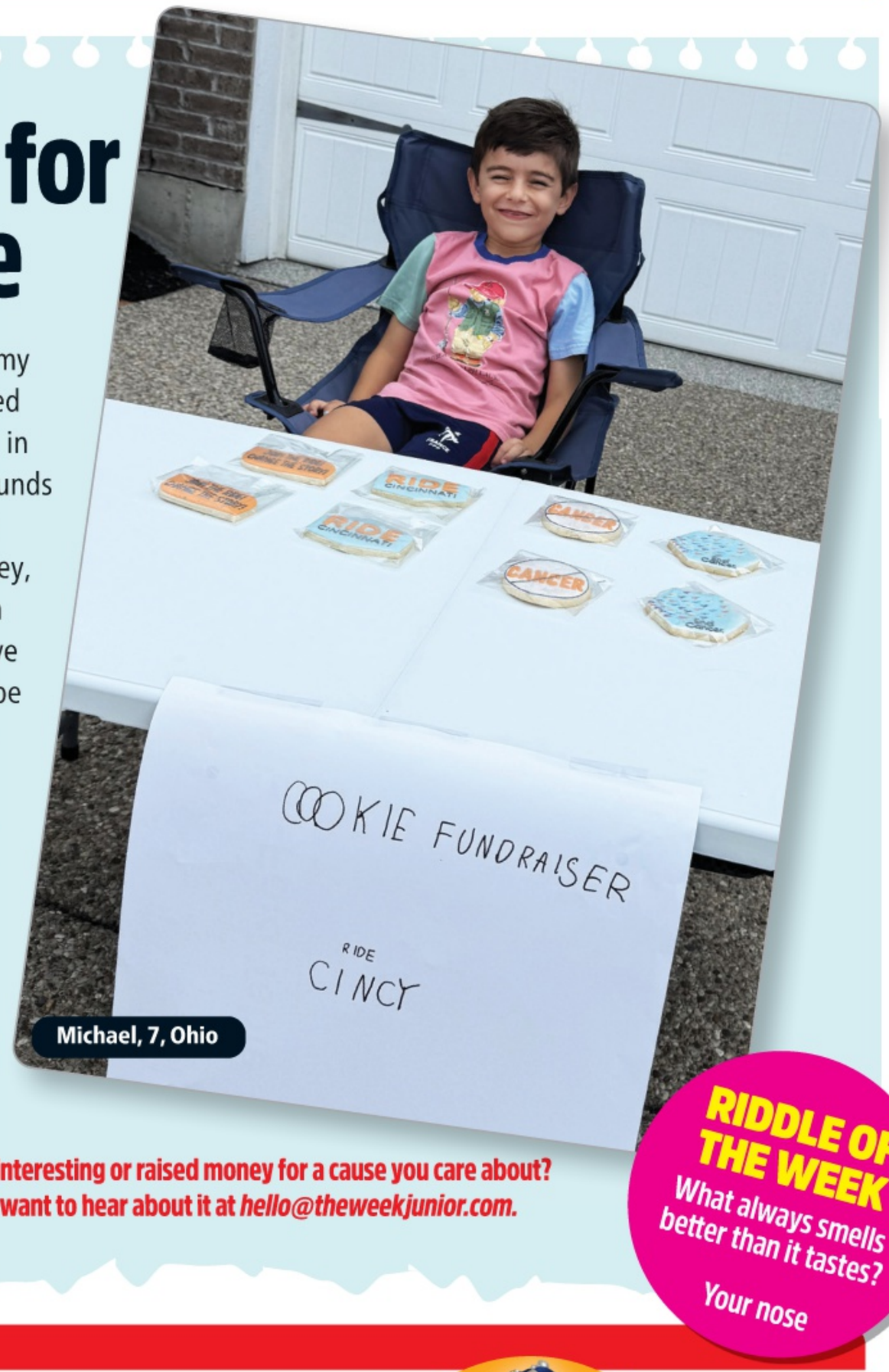
Editor's note

In this week's issue, we bid a fond and appreciative farewell to legendary conservationist Jane Goodall (p2). From her arrival in Africa at age 26 to her death on October 1 at age 91, she made pioneering discoveries about chimpanzees in the wild and traveled the world tirelessly advocating for the protection of animals and the planet. As many people have noted since her death, she changed the way we saw animals and ourselves. She will also be remembered for her steadfast belief in the power each of us has to change the world in our own way. "You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you," she said. "What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make." With her curiosity about the natural world, compassion for animals, and inspiring messages for humans, she made a difference we can all be grateful for.

Andrea Barbalich
Editorial Director

Biking for a cause

"On September 13, my family and I participated in a four-mile bike ride in Cincinnati. We raised funds to support local cancer research. To raise money, I held a cookie stand in my neighborhood. I love biking, and I knew I'd be able to raise funds by selling cookies. My target goal was $500, but I was able to beat that and actually raised $600. I hope we will be able to cure all childhood and adult-related cancers."



Michael, 7, Ohio

Have you done something interesting or raised money for a cause you care about? Whatever you're up to, we want to hear about it at *hello@theweekjunior.com*.

RIDDLE OF THE WEEK
What always smells better than it tastes?
Your nose

CHARITY OF THE WEEK

National Breast Cancer Foundation

This organization's mission is to educate people on breast cancer and provide hope to those affected. The foundation raises awareness and provides free programs for people facing the disease, including resources for early detection and support during treatment. It has provided screenings to more than 539,000 people in the past five years. Find out more at nationalbreastcancer.org.

NATIONAL BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION, INC.

Apply to join Junior Council!

***The Week Junior* is conducting a national search for 12 students, ages 8 to 14, who want to have their voices heard about the issues and causes that matter to them. During our seventh session of Junior Council, about six virtual workshops will be held from January through May 2026. Children will meet directly with *The Week Junior* editors and mentors, and a project created by council members may appear in a future issue of the magazine. To apply for the program, go to juniorcouncil.theweekjunior.com to download the application. The deadline to enter is October 20.**

Junior Council — The Week Junior

THE WEEK Junior IT'S YOUR TURN Email your news, views, and photos to *hello@theweekjunior.com*.

Your turn

YOUR PHOTOS

We'd love to see pictures you've taken or pictures with you in them! Have an adult email them to us at *hello@theweekjunior.com*, along with anything you would like us to know about what's happening in the photo.

"We think fruit belongs on sandwiches, and we loved these fruit sandwiches—they were delicious!" Jake, 11, and Alice, 10, Colorado

"We went to visit Portland Head Light and brought a copy of the magazine with the story 'All about lighthouses'!" Wyatt, 7, Massachusetts

"I love *KPop Demon Hunters*! Thanks for writing about it!" Demi, 10, California

Teacher OF THE WEEK

Teacher's Name: **Mr. Jayne**

School: **Pointers Run Elementary School**

"Mr. Jayne is a great teacher. I love how he always mixes school with a joke. Mr. Jayne helps me learn to the best of my abilities. He cares deeply and is always there when anyone needs him. If you are confused, he explains things to you. Mr. Jayne is also creative and able to find fun worksheets for us to do. He is also extremely helpful in the classroom."

Arjun, 10, Maryland

Nominate your teacher for Teacher of the Week!
Send your reason for the nomination, a photo of your teacher, and your school's name and address to *hello@theweekjunior.com*.

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Puzzle answers (from page 26)

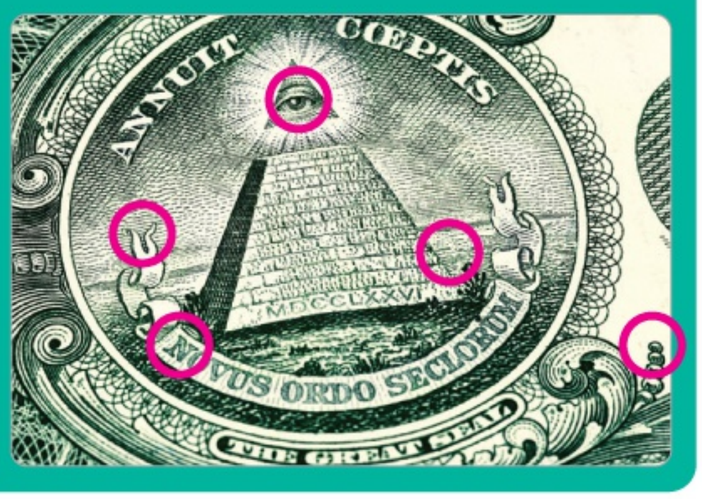
F	A	S	H	I	O	N		S	E	E
I		Q		N		U		P		Y
T	R	U	N	K		G	L	O	V	E
		I				G		U		B
M	U	D		S	H	E	L	T	E	R
A				N		T				O
J	E	A	L	O	U	S		C	O	W
E		C		R				O		
S	H	R	E	K		Z	E	B	R	A
T		E		E		O		R		D
Y	E	S		L	E	O	P	A	R	D

Keyword answer: vulture

Code cracker
Everglades
Yosemite
Grand Canyon
Yellowstone

Three for all
show up early
taking baby steps
cleared for landing

1	4	2	3	5
5	2	5	2	1
2	3	1	3	4
4	5	2	5	4
3	1	3	1	4



Quiz answers (from page 30)

1 "The Fate of Ophelia" **2** True **3** c) Japan **4** The Moon **5** c) New Mexico **6** Two **7** b) 39 **8** True **9** a) Twitlandia **10** True **11** c) Nashville SC **12** Mobiles **13** b) Four **14** False. It is a prequel. **15** 32 "Chunk"

We want to hear from you! To have your letters, photos, nominations, recommendations, or ideas considered for inclusion in the magazine, please include your first name, age, and state with your submission. By emailing your submission to us, you give *The Week Junior* consent to publish it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending anything to us.

Quiz

How much of this week's news can you remember?

1 What song from Taylor Swift's new album *The Life of a Showgirl* became Spotify's most streamed song in a single day?

2 True or false? The Ladies Professional Golf Association is the longest-running pro women's sports organization in the US.

True ☐ False ☐

3 A new power plant that uses osmosis to generate electricity recently opened in which country?

a) Denmark b) Germany c) Japan

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

4 Artist Evan Lorenzen created a tiny book that will be sent to what destination in outer space?

5 The world's largest balloon festival recently began in which US state?

a) Nebraska b) Nevada c) New Mexico

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

6 How many Emmy Awards did Kate McKinnon win for acting on *Saturday Night Live*?

7 How many racetracks are there in the video game Sonic Racing: CrossWorlds?

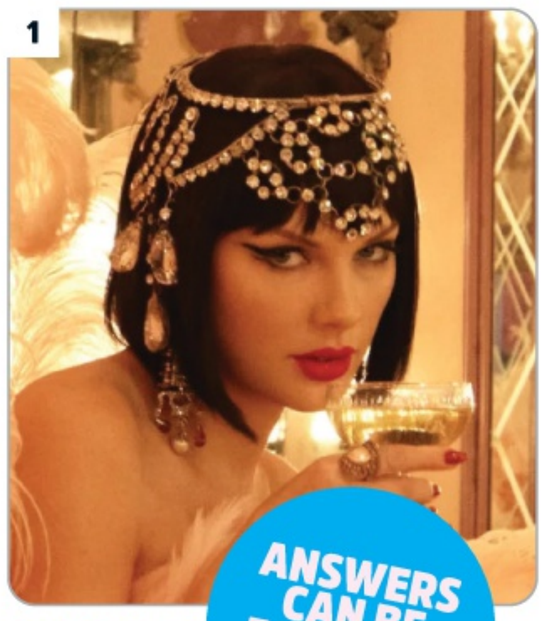
a) 24 b) 39 c) 50

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

8 True or false? Renowned animal behavior expert Jane Goodall discovered that chimps use tools, like humans do.

True ☐ False ☐

7


1

ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 29.

5

13

11

9 In the new animated movie *The Twits*, what is the name of the amusement park that is run by the main characters?

a) Twitlandia

b) Twitsville

c) Twitworld

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

10 True or false? Actor and author George Takei was the honorary chairperson of this year's Banned Books Week.

True ☐ False ☐

11 Which professional men's soccer club recently won the 2025 Lamar Hunt US Open Cup?

a) Austin FC

b) Los Angeles FC

c) Nashville SC

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

12 What are artist Alexander Calder's moving sculptures called?

13 Scientists have confirmed that there are how many distinct species of giraffe?

a) Two b) Four c) Six

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

14 True or false? The book *Coach* is a sequel to the other four books in the *Track* series.

True ☐ False ☐

15 What is the name of the bear that was crowned the champion of this year's Fat Bear Week?

THE WEEK Junior

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